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Applicants : Philip M. Ginsberg, et al.
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OUTCOMES
Group Art Unit : 3628
Examiner : Dass, Harish T

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Commissioner for Patents
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APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

This is an appeal from the decision of Examiner Harish T. Dass, Group Art Unit 3628, in the Final Office Action of February 24, 2009, rejecting claims 11, 13, 15, 61, and 62 (hereinafter the “Final Office Action”). A Notice of Appeal and a Pre-Appeal Conference Request were filed on June 24, 2009. A Pre-Appeal Conference Decision was mailed August 21, 2009.

Applicants request any extensions of time needed to make this paper timely. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the Appeal Brief filing fee as well as any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-3938.

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I. Real Party in Interest

The real party in interest of the present application is CFPH, LLC a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware, U.S.A., having a place of business at 110 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022. CFPH, LLC is wholly owned by Cantor Fitzgerald, L.P., which is organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware, U.S.A., having a place of business at 110 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no known related appeals or interferences.

III. Status of Claims

The following claims are pending and stand rejected in the present application:

Independent claim 11.

Dependent claims 13, 15, 61, and 62.

All pending claims are being appealed.

The following claims have been cancelled:

Claims 1-10, 12, 14, 16-55.

The following claims have been withdrawn:

Claims 56-60, 63-65.

IV. Status of Amendments

No amendments have been filed after the Final Office Action.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The presently claimed embodiment(s) generally relate to a method of real-time interactive wagering on event outcomes.

Specifically, independent claim **11** is directed to a method that includes determining a wagering limit. (See, e.g., paragraph 62) The method includes selecting event outcomes on which a client is authorized to wager, each event outcome has a minimum required wager associated therewith, and the client is authorized to wager on the selected event outcomes based on the minimum required wager of the event outcomes not exceeding the wagering limit. (See, e.g., paragraph 32) The method includes displaying a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes. (See, e.g., paragraph 34) The method includes receiving a request to wager on one of said selection of event outcomes, accepting the wager, and adjusting the wagering limit to reflect said wager. (See, e.g., paragraph 36)

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The grounds for rejection to be reviewed on appeal are whether:

Claims **11, 13, 15, 61, and 62** are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent Number 5,277,424 to Wilms (hereinafter, “Wilms”).

VII. Argument

A. Background

Claims **11, 13, 15, 61, and 62** rejected by the Final Office Action as allegedly being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Wilms.

B. Summary of Argument

The Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by failing to show that the limitation of “*selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager*” is in the prior art, and by failing to show that the limitation of “*each event outcome having a minimum required wager associated therewith*” is in the prior art. The Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* case of unpatentability by admitting that the limitation of “*displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes*” is not in the prior art. Also, The Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by relying upon a reference that teaches away from the limitations of “*selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager*” and “*displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes.*”

Further, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by relying upon numerous factual findings of the state of the art without providing any of the required evidentiary support of record to support these findings.

Furthermore, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by applying a completely new standard of patentability not grounded in the law. The Final Office Action also misapplies the holding of KSR to invent a second new standard of patentability not grounded in the law.

Even Further, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by failing to show that there is a motivation to combine the cited reference with the findings of fact regarding the state of the art that are made with no evidentiary support of record.

Still further, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by ignoring limitations of the dependent claims.

C. Standard of Review

The Board, in deciding *ex parte* appeals, is required to adjudicate the legal issues independently, and is not to give deference to the Examiner. It is not Applicants' burden to establish "error" by the Examiner or to persuade the Board in situations where the Examiner has failed to even raise a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability. Rather, if examination at the initial stage does not produce a *prima facie* case of unpatentability, then without more, the Applicants are entitled to grant of the patent. In re Oetiker, 977 F.2d 1443, 1445 (Fed. Cir. 1992). The Board reviews the ultimate legal decisions made by the Examiner de novo. In re Kahn, 441 F.3d 977, 988, 78 USPQ2d 1329, 1336 (Fed. Cir. 2006). All findings of fact must be supported by substantial evidence of record. Id. With respect to core factual findings in a determination of patentability, however, the Board cannot simply reach conclusions based on its own understanding or experience-or on its assessment of what would be basic knowledge or common sense. Rather, the Board must point to some concrete evidence in the record in support of these findings. In re Zurko, 258 F.3d 1379, 1385 (Fed. Cir. 2001).

D. Legal Standard of Obviousness under 35 USC § 103

If examination at the initial stage does not produce a *prima facie* case of unpatentability, then without more, the Applicants are entitled to grant of the patent. In re Oetiker, 977 F.2d 1443, 1445 (Fed. Cir. 1992). The initial burden of presenting a *prima facie* case of unpatentability is upon the Examiner. In re Oetiker, 977 F.2d at 1445. If the examiner fails to establish a *prima facie* case of unpatentability, the rejection is

improper and will be overturned. In re Rijckaert, 9 F.3d 1531, 1532 (Fed. Cir. 1993); In re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 1074, 5 USPQ2d 1596, 1598 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

To reject claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103, an examiner must show an unrebutted *prima facie* case of obviousness. In re Rouffet, 149 F.3d 1350, 1355 (Fed. Cir. 1998). To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981 (CCPA 1974).

In addition, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify a reference. *Graham v. Deere*, as well as all subsequent case law, requires that there be motivation. Graham v. John Deere Co., 383 U.S. 1 (1966).

A patent composed of several elements is not proved obvious merely by demonstrating that each of its elements was, independently, known in the prior art. KSR Int'l Co. v. Teleflex, Inc., 127 S.Ct. 1727, 1741 (2007). It is important to identify a reason that would have prompted a person of ordinary skill in the relevant field to combine the elements in the way the claimed invention does, since all claimed discoveries of necessity will be combinations of what, in some sense, is already known. *Id.* A factfinder must be aware of the distortion caused by hindsight bias and must be cautious of arguments reliant upon *ex post* reasoning. *Id.* at 1742.

This motivation is not exempt from the requirement of *Lee* and *Zurko* that all factual findings be supported by substantial evidence in the record. In re Lee, 277 F.3d 1338, 1342 (Fed. Cir. 2002); In re Zurko, 258 F.3d 1379, 1383-1386 (Fed. Cir. 2001). Thus, the Examiner must support all factual finding of a suggestion or motivation to

modify a reference with substantial evidence of record. Novamedix Distrib. at 9; Zurko at 1383-1386; Lee at 1342. Although the particular teachings, suggestions, or motivations need not always be written references, the obviousness test must proceed on the basis of *some* substantial evidence of record. See Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical v. Mylan Labs, 520 F.3d 1358, 1365 (Fed. Cir. 2008).

Nothing removes the requirement for substantial evidence support mandated by 5 U.S.C. § 706. Dickinson v. Zurko, 527 U.S. 150, 144 L. Ed. 2d 143, 119 S. Ct. 1816 (1999). All findings of fact must be supported by substantial evidence of record. Id. With respect to core factual findings in a determination of patentability, however, the Board cannot simply reach conclusions based on its own understanding or experience-or on its assessment of what would be basic knowledge or common sense. Rather, the Board must point to some concrete evidence in the record in support of these findings. In re Zurko, 258 F.3d 1379, 1385 (Fed. Cir. 2001).

The Office may *never* take Official Notice of facts that constitute the state of the art. In re Eynde, 480 F.2d 1364, 1370, 178 USPQ 470, 474 (CCPA 1973). Official Notice may not be used to “show specific knowledge of the prior art that may be peculiar to a particular art.” In re Ahlert, 424 F.2d at 1027, 165 USPQ at 420-21. Official Notice may be used, if at all, to “supplement or clarify the teaching of a reference disclosure, perhaps to justify or explain a particular inference to be drawn from the reference teaching.” Id. *Elaboration* or *explanation* of documents is nearly the *only* use that may be made of Official Notice, if any are proper at all, with respect to technological facts outside the arts that are in familiar, everyday use. *E.g.*, In re Pardo, 684 F.2d 912, 917, 214 USPQ 673, 677 (CCPA 1982), *quoting* Ahlert, 424 F.2d at 1091, 165 USPQ 420-21.

Secondary considerations such as commercial success, long felt but unsolved needs, failure of others, etc., may be used to show the obviousness or nonobviousness of a claim. Graham 383 U.S. at 18.

E. No Prima Facie Showing of Obviousness of Claim 11
SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

1. Wilms Does Not Teach or Suggest “selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager”

Claim 11 recites the following limitation:

selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager...
the client authorized to wager on the selected event outcomes based on the
minimum required wager of the event outcomes not exceeding the
wagering limit.

Page 3 of the Final Office Action incorrectly states that Wilms teaches this limitation without referencing any portion of Wilms. Because Wilms only discusses allowing players to wager on a **single** event outcome (i.e., the outcome of a next card game played on the video game system) Wilms cannot possibly teach or suggest *selecting event outcomes*.

In particular, Wilms states that “the present invention deals with the denomination and total amount of money wagered on **each round**.” Column 2, lines 42-47.

Accordingly, it is clear that Wilms only discusses wagering on **the one single event outcome** of the **one single next round** of the **one single game of cards**.

Wilms describes the operation of the video game system as follows: “A legend 12 instructs the player to select a denomination for the initial wager. The areas 10 and the legend 12 will disappear from the screen once the denomination of the wager has been

selected and they will be replaced by representations of **the game** cards.” Column 4, 27-34. “After the denomination is chosen, the player pushes another button 30 to indicate how many units of that denomination he or she wishes to wager on **the next round.**” Column 5, lines 49-52. This description makes clear that the **only one event outcome** discussed in Wilms is **the single event outcome of the single next round of the single game of cards**. Accordingly, while playing the game of Wilms, the only event outcome on which any wager may be placed is **the single event outcome of the single next round of the single game of cards**.

Wilms describes events at the end of a round as follows: “To speed play of **the game**, the device will be programmed so that the designated number of units carries forward from **round to round** until changed.” Column 5, lines 63-66 “If **the hand** is a winning hand, the number of units won are immediately added to the CREDIT indication 16, and a screen equivalent to that in FIG 1. is regenerated to afford the player the opportunity to change the denomination and/or units wagered for **the next round.**” Column 6, lines 27-31. It is again clear that after a first round, **the only event outcome** that Wilms discusses is **the single event outcome of the single next round of the single game of cards**. Accordingly, at any point of Wilms, **the only event outcome** on which any wager may be placed is **the single event outcome of the single next round of the single game of cards**.

Wilms does not teach or suggest *selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager*, as recited in claim 11 because Wilms only discusses a system configured to wager on **a single event outcome of a single round of a single game of cards**. Therefore, because the Final Office Action relies completely on Wilms when

making reference to this limitation, and Wilms does not teach or suggest this limitation, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by failing to show that every element of claim 11 is shown in the prior art.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

2. Wilms Does Not Teach or Suggest “each event outcome having a minimum required wager associated therewith”

Claim 11 recites the following limitation:

each event outcome having a minimum required wager associated therewith the client authorized to wager on the selected event outcomes based on the minimum required wager of the event outcomes not exceeding the wagering limit.

Page 3 of the Final Office Action incorrectly states that Wilms teaches this limitation without referencing any portion of Wilms. In fact, Wilms teaches away from this limitations by allowing the use of **any monetary value**. Therefore, Wilms cannot possibly teach or suggest “each event outcome having a **minimum required wager** associated therewith.”

In particular, Wilms states that “the gaming devices are usable with **any monetary value** and denomination of coin, currency and credit indicators (markers).” Abstract. Accordingly since **any monetary value** would include any value below any proposed minimum value, Wilms teaches away from the limitation of **each event outcome having a minimum required wager associated therewith** and cannot possibly teach or suggest this limitation.

Wilms does not teach or suggest *each event outcome having a minimum required wager associated therewith*, as recited in claim 11 because Wilms discusses the use of **any monetary value** and therefore teaches away from this limitation. Therefore, because the Final Office Action relies completely on Wilms when making reference to this limitation, and Wilms does not teach or suggest this limitation, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability by failing to show that every element of claim 11 is shown in the prior art.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

3. The Final Office Action Admits That Wilms does not Teach or Suggest “displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes”

Claim 11 recites the following limitation:

*displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of
wagerable event outcomes.*

Page 3 of the Final Office Actions states that “Wilms does not teach only showing those wagers that cost less than or equal to the wagering limit.” The Final Office Action does not state that Wilms teaches or suggests “displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes.” Wilms does not teach or suggest this limitation. The Final Office Action does not allege that this limitation is taught or suggested by any other cited prior art reference.

Accordingly, because all limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art in order to make a *prima facie* case of obviousness, and the Final Office Action admits that *displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event*

outcomes is not taught or suggested by Wilms and makes no statement that it is taught or suggested by any other prior art reference, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability of claim 11.

4. Wilms Teaches Away From “displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes”

Claim 11 recites the following limitations:

selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager...;

*displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of
wagerable event outcomes.*

Although, as discussed above, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* rejection by failing to show that *selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager* is taught or suggested by the cited prior art and failing to show or to even suggest that *displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes* is taught or suggested by the prior art, the reference that is cited by the Final Office Action, Wilms, actually teaches away from these limitations.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

a. Wilms Discusses Always Displaying Information about the One and Only Event on Which Players Can Wager

In particular, Wilms states that: “FIG. 1 illustrates a typical image displayed on the video screen during the “**idle**” period prior to the start of a game by a player. If desired, this image can alternate with an “**attract mode**” image or sequence of images designed to **draw a prospective player**’s attention to the gaming device and stimulate his or her interest in playing the game.” Column 4, lines 15-21. Figure 1 of Wilms shows

a display of wagering options for a next round of a card game. Accordingly, Wilms discusses that wagering options related to the one and only event outcome should be displayed at times when a system is idle and/or no player is using a system. It is clear that the system cannot be authorized to wager when the system is idle or when the system has no users, but nonetheless the system displays the wagering options.

By teaching that wagering options for the one and only event outcome should be displayed even when a system is idle or has no users, Wilms teaches away from *selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager and displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes*. Accordingly, a person having ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine Wilms with any reference that includes and/or to in any way modify Wilms to include these limitations. Therefore, there is no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability of claim 11 over Wilms.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

b. Wilms Discusses Displaying Information about Actions That Are Not Available For a Player

Also, figure 1 of Wilms shows that a player with **0 credits** and **\$0.00 in reserve** is shown all of the available denominations for a wager on the one and only event outcome. Even though the denomination for a next wager are not wagerable events and Wilms only discusses one wagerable event, as discussed above, this figure of Wilms teaches that information about actions that are not available for a player should be displayed nonetheless.

By teaching that wagering actions for which a player does not have sufficient credit should nonetheless be displayed to the player, Wilms teaches away from *selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager and displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes*. Accordingly, a person having ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine Wilms with any reference that includes and/or to in any way modify Wilms to include these limitations. Therefore, there is no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability of claim 11 over Wilms.

5. The Final Office Action Makes Findings of Facts of the State of The Art with No Evidentiary Support

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

a. The Final Office Action Makes a Factual Finding Regarding the Level of Ordinary Skill with No Evidentiary Support

The Final Office Action states “a player might, for instance, attempt to wager \$1 when he only had 95 ¢. Removing the \$1 from the screen is well within the level of ordinary skill & would yield predictable results.” Page 3. The Final Office Action provides no support for this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and the Notice of Panel Decision from Pre-Appeal Brief Review mailed August 21, 2009 admits as much on page 2, paragraph 5.

Moreover, this statement only addresses the current level of skill of a person having ordinary skill in the art. This is irrelevant. Only the level of skill at the time of the application is relevant in any way to any rejection of any patent claim.

This finding of fact of the state of the art that cannot be made without substantial evidence of record and does not even address a legally relevant issue. Because the Final Office Action provides no evidence of record to support this statement regarding the level of ordinary skill, and the statement addresses a current skill in the art, the statement cannot legally be used to support any rejection under 35 USC §103(a), and therefore no *prima facie* case of unpatentability has been made.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

b. The Final Office Action Makes a Factual Finding Regarding a predictable Result with No Evidentiary Support

The Final Office Action states “a player might, for instance, attempt to wager \$1 when he only had 95 ¢. Removing the \$1 from the screen is well within the level of ordinary skill & would yield predictable results.” Page 3. The Final Office Action provides no support for this statement. Although all things follow from the laws of nature, a finding of fact that a modification would yield a predictable result requires more than a mere conclusory statement.

Moreover, this statement addresses a current person having ordinary skill in the art. This is irrelevant. Only predictable results to a person at the time of the application is relevant in any way to any rejection of any patent claim.

This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art that cannot be made without substantial evidence of record and does not even address a legally relevant issue. Because the Final Office Action provides no evidence of record to support this statement regarding the predictability of the result and the statement addresses the current predictability of the result, the statement cannot legally be used to support any rejection

under 35 USC §103(a), and therefore no *prima facie* case of unpatentability has been made.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

c. The Final Office Action Makes Factual Findings Regarding a Motivation of One of Ordinary Skill with No Evidentiary Support

The Final Office Action states “displaying wagers a player cannot make might cause confusion.” Page 3. The record does not even indicate whether this is believed to be true in the abstract or is believe to be known by a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the application. Either way, The Final Office Action provides no evidence to support this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and therefore cannot be made without substantial evidence of record.

The Final Office Action states “a player might, for instance, attempt to wager \$1 when he only had 95 ¢. Removing the \$1 from the screen is well within the level of ordinary skill & would yield predictable results.” Page 3. The Final Office Action provides no support for this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and therefore cannot be made without substantial evidence of record. Also, as discussed above, the current level of skill and predictability are irrelevant.

The Final Office Action states “furthermore, it would reduce the risk of confusion. “ Pages 3. Again, the record does not even indicate whether this is believed to be true in the abstract or is believe to be known by a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the application. Either way, the Final Office Action provides no evidence to support this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and therefore cannot be made without substantial evidence of record.

The Final Office Action states “if all of the universe of wagers is listed, these(sic) is a potential for the player to be confused about which wagers he may participate in & which cost too much.” Page 5. Once more, the record does not even indicate whether this is believed to be true in the abstract or is believe to be known by a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the application. Either way, the Final Office Action provides no evidence to support this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and therefore cannot be made without substantial evidence of record.

The Final Office Action states “furthermore, a player is likely to be discouraged if he selects a number of potential wagers only to be told in each case that he cannot participate because he hasn’t enough money.” Page 5. Yet again, the record does not even indicate whether this is believed to be true in the abstract or is believe to be known by a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the application. Either way, the Final Office Action provides no evidence to support this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and therefore cannot be made without substantial evidence of record.

The Final Office Action states: “this might well lead the player to decide to take his money elsewhere.” Page 5. Still another time, the record does not even indicate whether this is believed to be true in the abstract or is believe to be known by a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the application. Either way, the Final Office Action provides no evidence to support this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and therefore cannot be made without substantial evidence of record.

The Final Office Action states: “Game designers have a huge incentive to make the game as easy to use as possible. Obviously, one way to do this is to list only those wagers that a player can afford to make.” Page 5. Even a further time, the record does not even indicate whether this is believed to be true in the abstract or is believe to be known by a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the application. Either way, the Final Office Action provides no evidence to support this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art and therefore cannot be made without substantial evidence of record.

The Final Office Action relies on each of these factual findings of the state of the art to determine that it would be obvious to modify “Wilms to only display those wagers that cost less than or equal to the wagering limit in order to reduce the risk of player confusion.” Page 4. The Final Office Action provides no evidence to support this statement. This statement amounts to a finding of the state of the art

These findings of fact of the state of the art cannot be made without substantial evidence of record. Because the Final Office Action provides no evidence of record to support these statements regarding the motivation to modify Wilms, these statements cannot legally be used to support any rejection under 35 USC §103(a), and therefore no *prima facie* case of unpatentability has been made.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

6. The Final Office Action Ends the Obviousness Analysis Without Showing that All Elements of the Claims are in the Prior Art

As discussed above, the Final Office Action makes several statements without evidentiary support regarding a motivation to perform the method of claim 11. After making such statements the Final Office Action declares claim 11 obvious.

The Final Office Action takes the position that obviousness may be shown merely by making statements about a theoretical motivation for an end result without any evidentiary support at all that any elements of that end result was ever known in the prior art. Under this newly created and illegal standard of obviousness, cold fusion would be obvious because there is a “huge incentive to” provide cheap and efficient energy and cold fusion “is one way to do this.” Such a line of reasoning may be created for any conclusion, but without evidence, such a standard does not rise to the level of legally sufficient to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability.

This standard of obviousness clearly fails to comply with the legal definition of obviousness that requires a finding that all elements of a claim are taught or suggested by the prior art **and** that there is a motivation to combine elements of the prior art in the way they are combined in the claim. The obviousness inquire does not stop at the motivation as proposed by the Final Office Action, but requires that all elements of the claim be taught or suggested by the prior art. The Final Office Action makes no attempt at all to show that all elements of claim 11 are taught or suggested in the prior art, but as discussed above, admits that the limitation of “**displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes**” is not taught or suggested by any prior art reference of record.

Therefore, because the Final Office Action applies only the motivation portion of the obviousness analysis and fails to show that all elements of the claims are in the prior art, the Final Office Action fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

7. The Holding of KSR is Not Relevant Where the Elements of the Claims Are Not Found in Any Cited Prior Art References

The Final Office action states that “The KSR case adjures examiners to apply common sense. Furthermore, it tells us that we must avoid formulaic approaches to the question of patentability & look at what would be obvious to one of ordinary skill.” Page 5.

KSR does not tell the Examiner to stop following the legal definition of obviousness that requires each and every element of a claim to be found in one or more cited prior art references and that there is a motivation to combine elements of the prior art in the way they are combined in the claim.

The holding of KSR applies to the requirement for a motivation to combine various references to hold a claim obvious under 35 USC §103(a). The holding of KSR applied to an instance where each and every element of a claim was found in the prior art across two or more references and a motivation to combine those references was at issue. KSR did not apply, as in this case, where the elements of the claim, as discussed above, are not found in any cited prior art reference.

Accordingly, by misapplying KSR to a situation that was not addressed by the holding of KSR, the Final Office Action creates a new and illegal standard of

patentability and fails to make a *prima facie* showing of unpatentability under any legal standard.

8. There is No Motivation to Combine Wilms with the Factual Findings of the State of the Art with no Evidentiary Support
SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

a. The Final Office Action Provides no Evidence of a Motivation

Even if all of the elements of the claim were taught by the combination of Wilms and the factual findings of the state of the art without any evidentiary support, the Final Office Action does not even attempt to provide evidence of record to show a motivation to combine Wilms and the factual findings of the state of the art without any evidentiary support. A whole sale lack of evidence cannot possibly satisfy the substantial evidence requirement. Accordingly, there can be no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability of claim 11.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

b. The Motivation of the Person of Ordinary Skill in the Art was to Provide Customers with More Wagering Options

The rejection relies on a motivation that is contradictory to the motivation at the time. The motivation of the person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the filing was to provide customers with more options for wagering, not to display a smaller set of options than the universe of options as proposed by the Final Office Action.

Column 1, lines 48-51 of U. S. Patent No. 4,743,022 to Wood, filed on March 6, 1986 state: “there has been for some time a strong desire by the casino industry to be able

to provide a draw poker type game which offers the wagerer more options and which encourages addition betting.”

Column 2, lines 18-22 of U.S. Patent No. 5816575 to Keller, filed on Jun 9, 1997, state “new younger Blackjack players are finding the game of 21 very boring because they have enjoyed the excitement of playing action packed video games and thus need more options and variations in the manner that 21 is now being played.”

Column 3, lines 39-44 of U.S. Patent No. 6,598,879 to Spur, filed on September 17, 2001, state that “it is an object of the present invention to provide a modified method of playing Blackjack that can make the game of Blackjack more interesting and exciting to the player. There is a need for a player to be able to have a choice of placing a side-bet that his hand will go over 21 after he has received a hit card.” and column 7, lines 42-45 state “other variations of the Late Bet provide for a late bet play for each individual hit card. In such variations, higher payoffs can be offered for each individual card to make the game more exciting for the player and more lucrative for the casino.”

Column 1, lines 49-54 of U.S. Patent No. 6,375,190 to Kocher, filed on October 2, 2000, state “these post initial deal rules allow more options for the player thereby making the game more interesting and potentially giving the player better odds.”

And column 1, lines 41-45 of U.S. Patent No. 6,877,745 to Walker, filed on June 23, 2000, state: “It is considered desirable from the point of view of the game proprietor to give the player more options relative to the game so that the player feels that he/she has a better opportunity to change his/her luck and therefore continue playing.”

It is clear from these citations that the motivation of a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of filing of the application was to provide players with more options to wager and not to display a smaller set of options than the universe of options. Accordingly, the motivation proposed by the Final Office Action both lacks evidentiary support and is contrary to the facts at the time of the application. Therefore, there is no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability of claim 11.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

c. If the Motivation of Confusion Existed and the Claim were Obvious, the prior art would have provided this solution therefore it is an unsolved long felt need

If, there was a problem with confusion by wagerers occurring at the time of the filing of the application, then, someone would have solved the problem if the solution was obvious. If Applicants claims solve the problem of confusion by wagerers identified by the Final Office Action, because the Final Office Action provides no evidence that someone else solved the problem, the claims are not obvious because they solve an unsolved long felt need.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

F. Limitations Ignored in Dependent Claim 13.

Dependent claim 13 recites the following limitation:

selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager in accordance with said adjusted wagering limit and displaying to said client an updated list comprising only said selection of event outcomes in accordance with said adjusted wagering limit.

The Final Office Action does not even address this limitation, but rather merely states “With respect to claim 13, each time the player plays the game, the credit limit reflects the results of the previous game.” Page 4. Even if this were true, which the Examiner has not shown, this statement has nothing to do with the limitation of claim 13.

Wilms states: “To speed play of the game, the device will be programmed so that the designated number of units carries forward from round to round until changed.” Column 5, lines 63-66 “If the hand is a winning hand, the number of units won are immediately added to the CREDIT indication 16, and a screen equivalent to that in FIG 1. is regenerated to afford the player the opportunity to change the denomination and/or units wagered for the next round.” Column 6, lines 27-31.

Accordingly, Wilms clearly allows the player to enter a next wager on a next round without any updated list of event outcomes. Therefore there has been no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability with respect to claim 13.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

G. Limitations Ignored in Dependent Claim 15

Dependent claim 15 recites the following limitation:

paying said client in a currency chosen by said client in response to the maturity of successful wager.

Wilms discusses that the video gaming system may “accept coins and currency of two or more designated countries.” Column 5, lines 25-27. However, Wilms does not teach or suggest any paying in a currency chosen by a client at all and the Final Office Action provides no citation to Wilms to support the rejection of this claim.

Therefore there has been no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability with respect to claim 15.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

H. Limitations Ignored in Dependent Claim 61

Dependent claim 61 recites the following limitation:

said minimum required wager comprises a price for said wager that varies, the method comprising selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager based on a change in the price of said wager, and displaying to said client an updated list comprising only said selection of event outcomes in accordance with said change in price.

The Final Office Action states: “The price of the wager varies – there are five prices to choose from.” Page 4. Accordingly, the Final Office Action admits that the prices of the wagers do not vary, but rather the amount to be wagered on the one and only event available is selected by the player from a list of five set denominations that are shown in Figure 1 of Wilms and that do not vary at all.

Therefore there has been no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability with respect to claim 15.

SEPARATE ARGUMENT OF PATENTABILITY

I. Limitations Ignored in Dependent Claim 62

Dependent claim 62 recites the following limitation:

updating the list to reflect real time changes in the price of said wager.

With respect to this claim, the Final Office Action merely states: “It is obvious to adjust the list of available wagers whenever any wager is to be made (i.e., in real time).” page 4. The Office action does not even attempt to comply with any of the requirements of obviousness but instead makes a legal conclusion without providing any evidence, reasoning, facts, or support at all. There is no teaching or suggestion that any price of any wager changes in Wilms but, as discussed above, the amount to be wagered on the one and only event available is selected by the player from a list of five set denominations shown in Figure 1 of Wilms.

Therefore there has been no *prima facie* showing of unpatentability with respect to claim 15.

V. Conclusion

Each argument made above applies similarly to any dependent claims that may depend from a claim about which an argument is directed. In view of the foregoing, Appellants submit that all of the pending claims are in proper condition for allowance, and the Board is respectfully requested to overturn the Examiner’s rejection of these claims.

Respectfully submitted,

October 21, 2009
Date

/Mark Miller/

Mark Miller
Reg. No. 58,234
Attorney for Appellants

VI. Claims Appendix

1-10 Cancelled

11. (Previously presented) A method of real-time interactive wagering on event outcomes, said method comprising:

determining a wagering limit for said client;

selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager, each event outcome having a minimum required wager associated therewith, the client authorized to wager on the selected event outcomes based on the minimum required wager of the event outcomes not exceeding the wagering limit;

displaying to said client a list comprising only said selection of wagerable event outcomes;

receiving a request from said client to wager on one of said selection of event outcomes;

accepting said wager from said client; and

adjusting said wagering limit of said client to reflect said wager.

12. Cancelled

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 further comprising selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager in accordance with

said adjusted wagering limit and displaying to said client an updated list comprising only said selection of event outcomes in accordance with said adjusted wagering limit.

14. Cancelled

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 further comprising paying said client in a currency chosen by said client in response to the maturity of successful wager.

16-55. Cancelled

56. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, wherein said wagering limit comprises a credit limit for said client.

57. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, wherein said one event outcome comprises at least one of a maturity date and time.

58. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 57, wherein said event outcome comprises a payout of a casino game as of the at least one of the maturity date and time.

59. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 57, wherein said event outcome comprises a value for a security at the at least one of the maturity date and time.

60. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 59, wherein said security comprises an index.

61. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said minimum required wager comprises a price for said wager that varies, the method comprising selecting event outcomes on which said client is authorized to wager based on a change in the price of said wager, and displaying to said client an updated list comprising only said selection of event outcomes in accordance with said change in price.

62. (Previously presented) The method of claim 61, comprising updating the list to reflect real time changes in the price of said wager.

63. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, comprising displaying at least one event outcome regardless of said wagering limit and based on the at least one event outcome being at least one of a popular wager, a reference wager, a promotional wager, and a wager based on the client's past wagering activity.

64. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, wherein at least one of said event outcomes is associated with a market for an item and wherein said minimum required wager comprises a price for said event outcome, the method comprising determining that

said price is unavailable for the at least one of said event outcomes and calculating said price for the at least one of said event outcomes based on available market information.

65. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 64, wherein said available market information comprises information associated with at least one related market.

VII. Evidence Appendix

A. U. S. Patent No. 4,743,022 to Wood, filed on March 6, 1986

See, e.g., column 1, lines 48-51

[54] 2ND CHANCE POKER METHOD

[76] Inventor: Michael W. Wood, 1106 Willow
Brook Ave., Denham Springs, La.
70726

[21] Appl. No.: 837,041

[22] Filed: Mar. 6, 1986

[51] Int. Cl.⁴ A63F 1/00

[52] U.S. Cl. 273/85 CP; 273/85 G

[58] Field of Search 273/85 G, 85 GP, 292,
273/149 R, 149 P, 38 A

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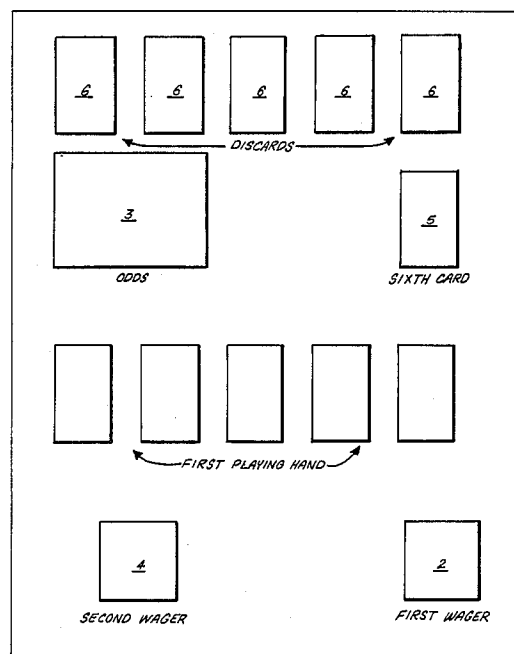
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Primary Examiner—Maryann Lastova
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—William David Kiesel

[57] ABSTRACT

An improved method of playing a casino-type poker game which can be played as either a table game or computer video game is disclosed wherein a player, by making an additional wager, can draw a sixth card so as to make the best poker hand from the six cards, provided the sixth card could possibly result in the player's obtaining a straight or better; and further, wherein the amount of the payback on the second wager varies depending upon the first five cards.

6 Claims, 1 Drawing Sheet



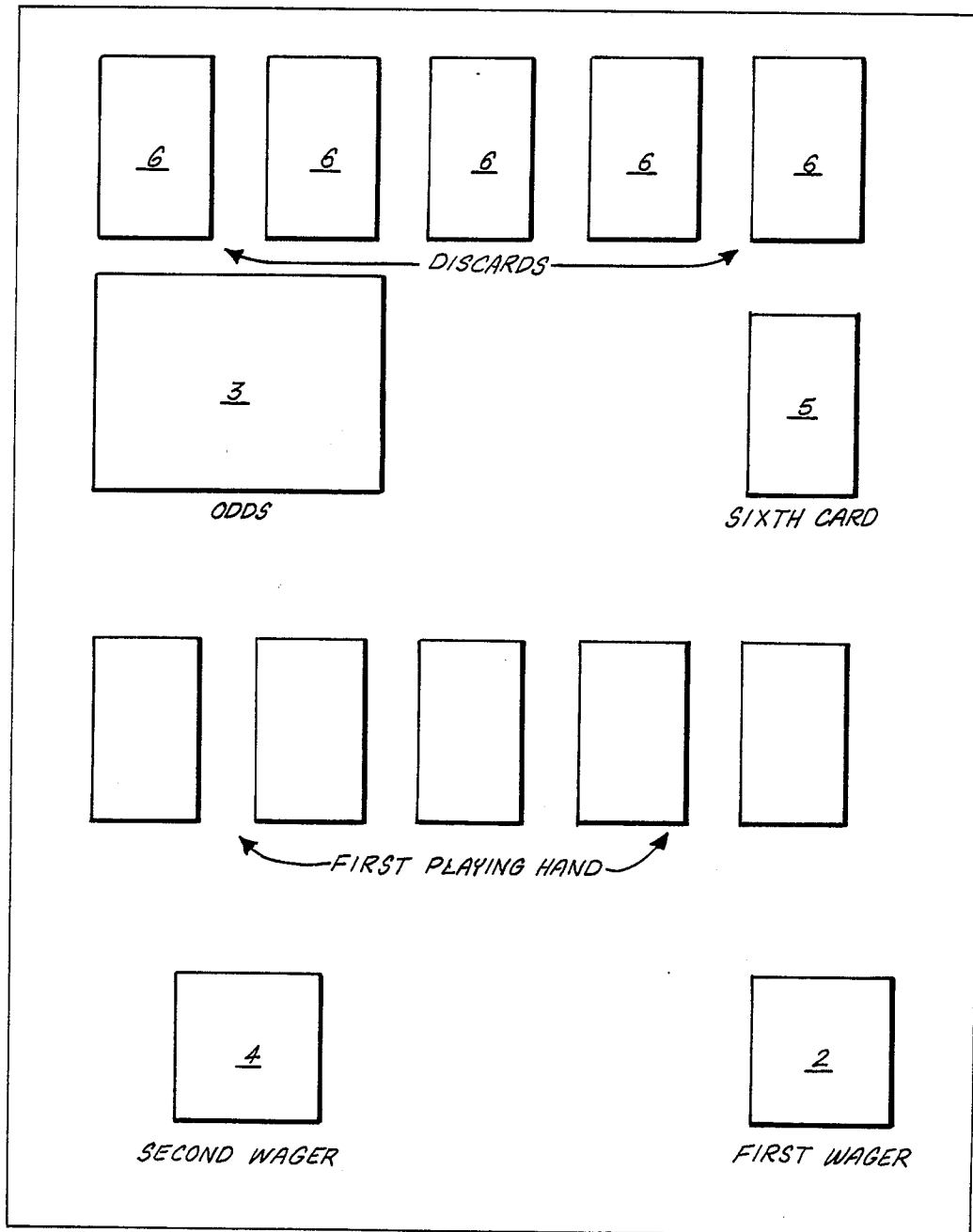


FIG. 1.

2ND CHANCE POKER METHOD

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to a method for playing a casino-type game, and more particularly to a poker-type game that can be played as either a table game or a computer video game.

2. Prior Art

Card games have for centuries been a form of entertainment as well as wagering. However, in casino establishments, particularly in the United States, a wagering game cannot be played unless it meets all of the commercial criteria of the casino and the regulatory criteria established by the state or other governing authority. These criteria would include the following: (1) the game must be entertaining to play and have an ability to attract certain amounts of wagers during predetermined time periods, (2) the game must appear to have reasonable odds in favor of the player, but (3) the game must actually have unvarying overall odds in favor of the casino or dealer yet these odds cannot in many cases exceed certain limits, and (4) the game must be designed to be simple and easily monitored by non-players and the dealer to avoid errors and cheating. All of these factors have made it extremely difficult to obtain the necessary approvals for playing a new game in a casino.

There are many variations of poker. The most relevant known prior art game is Second Draw poker and a slight variation thereof called Second Chance poker. Second Draw is played like the typical casino stud poker game except that after a player has been dealt five cards, he is given an option to discard one card and draw a sixth card in an attempt to improve his hand. In this game, no second wager or change in odds is permitted. "Second Chance" poker is similar except that the player is given an opportunity to discard his entire first hand and draw a second hand. Again, no second wager is permitted, but the odds drop a constant amount if a second hand is elected.

To the applicant's knowledge, Second Draw and Second Chance have not been licensed for play in casinos. While the above mentioned games have appeared in computer video game format, their appeal has been diminished by the lack of random generation of cards.

While these earlier stud poker games have appealed to players, there has been for some time a strong desire by the casino industry to be able to provide a draw poker type game which offers the wagerer more options and which encourages additional betting, as well as meets all other governing authority, particularly one which can be computer played.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Therefore it is an object of this invention to provide a method of playing a draw poker type game which meets all of the criteria of casinos and regulatory agencies.

Another object of this invention is to provide a method of playing a draw poker type game on a computer and its video terminal which meets all of the criteria of casinos and regulatory agencies.

These and other objects and advantages of this invention shall become apparent from the ensuing descriptions of the invention.

Accordingly, a casino-type, draw poker game is described wherein the player makes a first wager and

receives five cards, then may discard up to five cards and receive five new cards to form a second hand, the second hand being compared to a posted, fixed, hand ranking to determine if the player has lost his first wager or if the player has won in an amount varied by posted odds correlated to the fixed, hand ranking. This comparison is achieved by comparing the first or second hand to an odds chart to determine if the player has lost or won an amount based on the first wager. The player is then allowed to place a second wager entitling the player to draw a sixth card to form a third hand consisting of any of the five cards in the second hand plus the sixth card, provided the sixth card would create the possibility of the third hand's achieving a ranking of a straight or higher, and also provided that, if the second hand had a ranking of straight or higher, the sixth card must create the possibility of the third hand's achieving a still higher ranking, dealing the sixth card to the player, and determining if the player lost his second wager or if the player has won an amount varied by a second set of posted odds.

Again, the comparison of the third hand is accomplished using the odds chart to determine if the player has lost or won an amount based on the second wager. This odds chart comprises data which determines whether or not a player wins or loses and, if the player wins, the odds for winning. In that odds may vary, the odds chart may vary.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is illustrative of a preferred embodiment of the gaming table.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE APPENDIX

Appendix A is the computer software program which is preferred for use to operate a computer and peripheral screen for playing the game.

PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

In one preferred embodiment, a master deck of 52 standard playing cards which are ranked from low to high in the order of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Jack, Queen, King and Ace is utilized along with playing table 1. The player first places a wager in the designated area 2 and is dealt five cards face up which constitutes a first hand. Hands are ranked as follows: high card, a pair, two pairs, three-of-a-kind, straight, flush, full house, four-of-a-kind, and straight flush. The player now elects to discard up to any five cards in the first hand and have them replaced with an equal number of new cards from the pool of cards remaining in the 52-card deck which, with any retained, forms a second hand. In a preferred embodiment, the player loses the first wager if the second hand, or first hand if no cards are discarded, has no pair; receives the wager back if the first hand has a pair; and receives, if the first hand has a higher ranking, an increased amount according to the posted odds 3.

The player may now be entitled to make a second wager by placing it in a designated area 4 and receive a sixth card 5 provided that the sixth card, if dealt, could, when combined with any four of the cards in the second hand, result in a five card third hand having a ranking of a straight or higher and having a ranking higher than the second hand.

In a more preferred embodiment, the player is allowed to see all of the previously discarded cards 6 from the first hand.

If qualified and desired, the player makes a second wager and the sixth card 5 is dealt and turned face up. The highest ranking possible five card hand is then formed from the six cards which constitute the third hand. If the third hand is not of a ranking of a straight or higher and not of a ranking greater than the second hand, the player loses his second wager. However, if the third hand has a ranking of a straight or higher and has a ranking higher than the second hand, then the player wins an amount depending on his second wager and the posted odds 3 which preferably vary depending on the rank of the second hand.

This game may also be played with the use of a computer and video screen. Appendix A details a preferred software program which is written in JANUS/ADA language developed by RR Software, Inc., wherein JANUS/ADA is a subset of ADA (trademark of the U.S. Department of Defense). A brief description of the major software routines is as follows:

PROCEDURE SCP: Main program which executes and displays the 2nd Chance™ Poker Game.

PACKAGE SCP 1: Implements the basic operations needed for creation and display of the various poker

hand types.

PACKAGE SCP 2: Implements and displays a button layout for 2nd Chance™ Poker hand.

PACKAGE SCP 3: Allows for the evaluation of a five-card poker hand and a six-card 2nd Chance™ Poker hand.

PACKAGE SCP 4: Determines how many 2nd Chance™ Poker play-offs will be offered to a player and what their value will be.

PACKAGE PLAYCARD: Implements the features of regular playing cards.

PACKAGE SHOWCARD: Allows a playing card to be displayed.

PACKAGE DEALING: Allows for the shuffling and dealing of a deck of cards.

PACKAGE UNIFORM: Generates uniform random numbers.

PACKAGE GRAPHICS: Allows letters and symbols to be displayed on a video display monitor.

PACKAGE TOOLKIT: Routines to facilitate the writing of programs.

The computer also has means for registering a wager.

There are of course alternate embodiments which have not been specifically mentioned, but which are obvious and intended to be included within the scope of the invention as defined by the following claims.

APPENDIX A

Current date is Fri 1-03-1986

Enter new date (mm-dd-yy):

Volume in drive C is HARD DISK
Directory of C:\POKER

.	<DIR>	12-27-85	1:54p
..	<DIR>	12-27-85	1:54p
DISKETTE	<DIR>	12-27-85	1:54p
SAVE	<DIR>	12-27-85	1:54p
TEMP	<DIR>	12-27-85	1:54p
SCP1	LIB	512	1-01-86 3:30p
SCP1	PKG	2176	1-01-86 3:36p
SCP1	SYM	1679	1-01-86 3:30p
SCP1	JRL	1849	1-01-86 3:37p
SCP2	LIB	384	1-01-86 3:39p
SCP2	PKG	1152	1-01-86 3:44p
SCP2	SYM	1299	1-01-86 3:39p
SCP2	JRL	1375	1-01-86 3:44p
SCP3	LIB	256	1-01-86 3:45p
SCP3	PKG	5248	1-01-86 4:16p
SCP3	SYM	1228	1-01-86 3:46p
SCP3	JRL	3664	1-01-86 4:17p
SCP4	LIB	640	1-01-86 9:03p
SCP4	PKG	3712	1-02-86 12:59a
SCP4	SYM	1503	1-01-86 9:04p
SCP4	JRL	3342	1-02-86 1:01a
SCP	JRL	5568	1-02-86 10:52a
SCP	SYM	1906	1-02-86 10:52a
SCP	PKG	4608	1-02-86 10:51a
SCP	EXE	69283	1-02-86 10:54a

25 File(s) 6995968 bytes free

with graphics;

use graphics;

package scp1 is

```
type poker_hand_type is (null_hand,value_pair,pair_of_jacks,pair_of_queens,
pair_of_kings,pair_of_aces,two_pair,three_of_a_kind,straight,flush,
full_house,four_of_a_kind,straight_flush,royal_flush);
```

```
five_coin : array(poker_hand_type) of natural;
```

```

procedure put (item : poker_hand_type);

procedure first_hand_payouts (position : position_type);

end;

with text_io;
use text_io;

package body scp1 is

  procedure put (item : poker_hand_type) is
    output : string;
  begin
    case item is
      when royal_flush      => output := "ROYAL FLUSH";
      when straight_flush   => output := "STRAIGHT FLUSH";
      when four_of_a_kind    => output := "4 OF A KIND";
      when full_house       => output := "FULL HOUSE";
      when flush            => output := "FLUSH";
      when straight         => output := "STRAIGHT";
      when three_of_a_kind   => output := "3 OF A KIND";
      when two_pair         => output := "2 PAIR";
      when pair_of_aces      => output := "PAIR OF ACES";
      when pair_of_kings     => output := "PAIR OF KINGS";
      when pair_of_queens    => output := "PAIR OF QUEENS";
      when pair_of_jacks     => output := "PAIR OF JACKS";
      when value_pair        => output := "JACKS OR BETTER";
      when null_hand        => output := "NULL HAND";
    end case;
    put(output);
  end;

  procedure first_hand_payouts (position : position_type) is
    _n : natural := 0;
  begin
    single_line;
    box(position,11,27);
    for a in reverse value_pair .. royal_flush loop
      if a not in pair_of_jacks .. pair_of_aces then
        n := n + 1;
        move(position.line + n,position.column + 1);
        put(a; column(position.column + 16); put(" PAYS ");
        put(five_coin(a),4);
      end if;
    end loop;
  end;

begin
  five_coin(royal_flush)      := 4000;
  five_coin(straight_flush)   := 250;
  five_coin(four_of_a_kind)    := 125;
  five_coin(full_house)       := 45;
  five_coin(flush)            := 30;
  five_coin(straight)         := 20;
  five_coin(three_of_a_kind)   := 15;
  five_coin(two_pair)         := 10;
  five_coin(pair_of_aces)      := 5;
  five_coin(pair_of_kings)     := 5;
  five_coin(pair_of_queens)    := 5;
  five_coin(pair_of_jacks)     := 5;
  five_coin(value_pair)        := 5;
  five_coin(null_hand)        := 0;

end;

with graphics;
use graphics;

package scp2 is

  type button_type is
    (deal,hold_1,hold_2,hold_3,hold_4,hold_5,draw,second_chance);

  function button return button_type;

```

```

procedure button_information (position : position_type);

end;

with text_io;
use text_io;

with toolkit;
use toolkit;

package body scp2 is

  function button_return button_type is
    k : Key_type;
    b : button_type;
  begin
    loop
      k := Key;
      exit when k /= 9;
    end loop;
    case k is
      when 8 => b := deal;
      when 1 => b := hold_1;
      when 2 => b := hold_2;
      when 3 => b := hold_3;
      when 4 => b := hold_4;
      when 5 => b := hold_5;
      when 6 => b := draw;
      when 7 => b := second_chance;
      when 9 => fatal_error;
      when 0 => move(1,1);
                  halt;
    end case;
    return b;
  end;

  procedure button_information (position : position_type) is
  begin
    single_line;
    box(position,6,16);
    move(position.line + 1,position.column + 1); put("1-5 HOLD");
    move(position.line + 2,position.column + 1); put(" 6 DRAW");
    move(position.line + 3,position.column + 1); put(" 7 2nd CHANCE");
    move(position.line + 4,position.column + 1); put(" 8 DEAL");
  end;

end;

with playcard;
use playcard;

with scp1;
use scp1;

package scp3 is

  card : array(1 .. 6) of card_type;

  function evaluate_first_hand return poker_hand_type;

  function evaluate_second_chance return poker_hand_type;

end;

with toolkit;
use toolkit;

package body scp3 is

  type hand_type is array(1 .. 5) of card_type;

  function evaluate (hand : hand_type) return poker_hand_type is
    answer : poker_hand_type;

```

```

rank_count : array(rank_type) of integer range 0 .. 4;
suit_count : array(suit_type) of integer range 0 .. 5;
meta_rank   : array(0 .. 4)   of integer range 0 .. 13;
meta_suit   : array(0 .. 5)   of integer range 0 .. 4;

straight_flag : boolean;

begin

  for a in rank_count'range loop rank_count(a) := 0; end loop;
  for a in suit_count'range loop suit_count(a) := 0; end loop;
  for a in meta_rank'range loop meta_rank(a) := 0; end loop;
  for a in meta_suit'range loop meta_suit(a) := 0; end loop;

  for a in hand'range loop
    rank_count(rank(hand(a))) := rank_count(rank(hand(a))) + 1;
    suit_count(suit(hand(a))) := suit_count(suit(hand(a))) + 1;
  end loop;

  for a in rank_count'range loop
    meta_rank(rank_count(a)) := meta_rank(rank_count(a)) + 1;
  end loop;

  for a in suit_count'range loop
    meta_suit(suit_count(a)) := meta_suit(suit_count(a)) + 1;
  end loop;

  if rank_count(ace) = 1 and rank_count(deuce) = 1 and
    rank_count(trey) = 1 and rank_count(four) = 1 and
    rank_count(five) = 1 then
    straight_flag := true;
  else
    straight_flag := false;
    for a in deuce .. ten loop
      if rank_count(a) = 1 then
        if rank_count(rank_type'val(rank_type'pos(a) + 1)) = 1 and
          rank_count(rank_type'val(rank_type'pos(a) + 2)) = 1 and
          rank_count(rank_type'val(rank_type'pos(a) + 3)) = 1 and
          rank_count(rank_type'val(rank_type'pos(a) + 4)) = 1 then
          straight_flag := true;
        end if;
        exit; -- optimization
      end if;
    end loop;
  end if;

  if straight_flag and meta_suit(5) = 1 then
    if rank_count(ace) = 1 and rank_count(king) = 1 then
      answer := royal_flush;
    else
      answer := straight_flush;
    end if;
  elsif meta_rank(4) = 1 then
    answer := four_of_a_kind;
  elsif meta_rank(3) = 1 and meta_rank(2) = 1 then
    answer := full_house;
  elsif meta_suit(5) = 1 then
    answer := flush;
  elsif straight_flag then
    answer := straight;
  elsif meta_rank(3) = 1 then
    answer := three_of_a_kind;
  elsif meta_rank(2) = 2 then
    answer := two_pair;
  elsif rank_count(ace) = 2 then
    answer := pair_of_aces;
  elsif rank_count(king) = 2 then
    answer := pair_of_kings;
  elsif rank_count(queen) = 2 then
    answer := pair_of_queens;
  elsif rank_count(jack) = 2 then
    answer := pair_of_jacks;
  else
    answer := null_hand;
  end if;
end if;

```

```

    return answer;
end evaluate;

function evaluate_first_hand return poker_hand_type is
    answer : poker_hand_type;
    hand   : hand_type;
begin
    check(card(6) = null_card);
    for a in 1 .. 5 loop
        hand(a) := card(a);
    end loop;
    answer := evaluate(hand);
    if answer in pair_of_jacks .. pair_of_aces then
        answer := value_pair;
    end if;
    return answer;
end;

function evaluate_second_chance return poker_hand_type is
    answer      : poker_hand_type;
    hand        : hand_type;
    five_cards  : poker_hand_type;
    intermediate : poker_hand_type;
    six_cards   : poker_hand_type := null_hand;
    n           : natural := 0;
begin
    check(card(6) /= null_card);
    for a in 1 .. 5 loop
        hand(a) := card(a);
    end loop;
    five_cards := evaluate(hand);
    for replace in 1 .. 5 loop
        for a in 1 .. 5 loop
            hand(a) := card(a);
        end loop;
        hand(replace) := card(6);
        intermediate := evaluate(hand);
        if intermediate > six_cards then
            six_cards := intermediate; → six_cards := intermediate;
        end if;
    end loop;
    if six_cards > five_cards then
        answer := six_cards;
    else
        for a in 1 .. 5 loop
            if rank(card(a)) = rank(card(6)) then
                n := n + 1;
            end if;
        end loop;
        if n = 1 and rank(card(6)) in jack .. ace then
            case rank(card(6)) is
                when ace    => answer := pair_of_aces;
                when king   => answer := pair_of_kings;
                when queen  => answer := pair_of_queens;
                when jack   => answer := pair_of_jacks;
                when others => fatal_error;
            end case;
        else
            answer := null_hand;
            -- in this case, null_hand signifies that there was no
            -- improvement with the addition of the 2nd Chance card.
        end if;
    end if;
    return answer;
end;
end;
```

```

with graphics;
use graphics;

with scp1;
use scp1;

package scp4 is

    type payoff_type is
        record
            category : poker_hand_type range pair_of_jacks .. royal_flush;
            coins     : integer range 5 .. 235;
        end record;

    procedure initialize_second_chance;

    number_of_payoffs : integer range 0 .. 8;
    payoff             : array(1 .. 8) of payoff_type;

    procedure deal_second_chance;

    winner : integer range 0 .. 8;

    procedure put_house_edge (position : position_type);

end;

with text_io;
use text_io;

with playcard, toolkit, dealing;
use playcard, toolkit, dealing;

with scp3;
use scp3;

package body scp4 is

    house_edge : string := "";

    procedure initialize_second_chance is

        unseen_cards : natural := 0;
        frequency     : array(pair_of_jacks .. royal_flush) of natural;
        intermediate  : poker_hand_type;
        sum           : natural := 0;
        edge          : float;
        switch        : boolean;
        temp          : payoff_type;

    begin

        for a in frequency'range loop
            frequency(a) := 0;
        end loop;

        reset_peek;
        while more_to_peek loop
            card(6) := peek;
            unseen_cards := unseen_cards + 1;
            intermediate := evaluate_second_chance;
            if intermediate in pair_of_jacks .. royal_flush then
                frequency(intermediate) := frequency(intermediate) + 1;
            end if;
        end loop;
        card(6) := null_card;

        number_of_payoffs := 0;
        for a in reverse straight .. royal_flush loop
            if frequency(a) >= 1 then
                number_of_payoffs := number_of_payoffs + 1;
                payoff(number_of_payoffs).category := a;
            end if;
        end loop;
    
```

```

if number_of_payoffs > 2 then
    number_of_payoffs := 2;
end if;

if number_of_payoffs = 2 then
    payoff(2).coins := 10;
end if;

if number_of_payoffs = 0 then
    house_edge := "";
else
    for a in reverse pair_of_jacks .. three_of_a_kind loop
        if frequency(a) >= 1 then
            number_of_payoffs := number_of_payoffs + 1;
            payoff(number_of_payoffs).category := a;
            payoff(number_of_payoffs).coins := five_coin(a);
        end if;
    end loop;

    for a in 2 .. number_of_payoffs loop
        sum := sum + frequency(payoff(a).category) * payoff(a).coins;
    end loop;

    payoff(1).coins := 5 * ((unseen_cards - (sum / 5)) /
                           frequency(payoff(1).category));

    sum := sum + frequency(payoff(1).category) * payoff(1).coins;

    edge := 100.0 * (1.0 - (float(sum) / float(unseen_cards * 5)));

    if edge = 0.0 then
        house_edge := "DEAD EVEN";
    elsif edge > 0.0 then
        put(house_edge, edge, 2, 0);
        house_edge := house_edge & " %";
    else
        fatal_error;
    end if;

    loop -- sort payouts by coins paid and poker ranking
        switch := false;
        for a in 1 .. number_of_payoffs - 1 loop
            if payoff(a).coins < payoff(a + 1).coins then
                temp := payoff(a);
                payoff(a) := payoff(a + 1);
                payoff(a + 1) := temp;
                switch := true;
            end if;
        end loop;
        exit when not switch;
    end loop;

end if;

end initialize_second_chance;

procedure deal_second_chance is
    second_chance_hand : poker_hand_type;
begin
    card(6) := deal;
    second_chance_hand := evaluate_second_chance;
    winner := 0;
    for a in 1 .. number_of_payoffs loop
        if payoff(a).category = second_chance_hand then
            winner := a;
        end if;
    end loop;
end;

procedure put_house_edge (position : position_type) is
begin
    move(position);

```

```

    put("HOUSE EDGE : "); put(house_edge);
    house_edge := "";
end;
end;

with text_io;
use text_io;

with playcard, toolkit, graphics, showcard, uniform, dealing;
use playcard, toolkit, graphics, showcard;

with scp1, scp2, scp3, scp4;
use scp1, scp2, scp3, scp4;

procedure scp is
    p : array(1 .. 6) of position_type; -- card positions on the monitor
    h : array(1 .. 5) of boolean;      -- cards to hold

    procedure hold (card_number : positive) is
    begin
        check(card_number in 1 .. 5);
        h(card_number) := not h(card_number);
        move(p(card_number).line + 5, p(card_number).column + 2);
        if h(card_number) then
            put("HOLD");
        else
            put(" ");
        end if;
    end;

    procedure game_over is
    begin
        move(1, 72);
        put("GAME OVER");
    end;

begin
    for a in 1 .. 5 loop
        p(a) := create(4, (a - 1) * 9 + 1);
    end loop;
    p(6) := create(6, 51);

    uniform.randomly_initialize;

    first_hand_payouts(create(15, 1));
    button_information(create(20, 29));

    loop
        <<start>>

        for a in line_range loop
            case a is
                when 1 .. 14 => move(a, 1);
                when 15 .. 19 => move(a, 28);
                when 20 .. 25 => move(a, 45);
            end case;
            erase_line;
        end loop;

        dealing.reset_deal;
        for a in 1 .. 5 loop
            card(a) := dealing.deal;
        end loop;
    end loop;
end scp;

```

```

--end loop; END LOOP
card(6) := null_card;

for a in h'range loop
    h(a) := false;
end loop;

for a in 1 .. 5 loop
    card_back(p(a));
end loop;

for a in 1 .. 5 loop
    pause(0.7);
    card_front(p(a), card(a));
end loop;

loop
    case button is
        when hold_1 => hold(1);
        when hold_2 => hold(2);
        when hold_3 => hold(3);
        when hold_4 => hold(4);
        when hold_5 => hold(5);
        when draw   => exit;
        when others => null;
    end case;
end loop;

for a in 1 .. 5 loop
    if not h(a) then
        card(a) := dealing.deal;
        card_back(p(a));
    end if;
end loop;

for a in 1 .. 5 loop
    if not h(a) then
        pause(0.5);
        card_front(p(a), card(a));
    end if;
end loop;

if evaluate_first_hand >= value_pair then
    move(1,1);
    put("WINNER  ** ");
    put(five_coin(evaluate_first_hand),3);
    put(" COINS PAID");
end if;

initialize_second_chance;

if number_of_payoffs >= 1 then

    move(p(6).line - 3, p(6).column + 2); put("2nd");
    move(p(6).line - 2, p(6).column);    put("CHANCE");

    double_line;
    box(create(p(6).line - 1, p(6).column - 2), 7, 11);
    logo_back(p(6));

    move(13,41);
    put("DO YOU WANT A '2nd CHANCE' ?");
    single_line;
    box(create(14,42), number_of_payoffs + 2, 25);

    for a in 1 .. number_of_payoffs loop
        --move(14, 42 + a, 43);
        put(payoff(a).category); move(14 + a, 43);
        move(14 + a, 57);
        put(" PAYS ");
        put(payoff(a).coins, 3);
    end loop;

loop

```

```

case button is
  when second_chance =>
    pause(1.5);
    deal_second_chance;
    card_front(p(6),card(6));

    if winner >= 1 then
      move(2,1);
      put("WINNER  ** ");
      put(payload(winner).coins,3);
      put(" COINS PAID - 2nd CHANCE");
      save_graphics;
      blink;
      move(14 + winner,43);
      put(payload(winner).category);
      move(14 + winner,57);
      put(" PAYS ");
      put(payload(winner).coins,3);
      restore_graphics;
    end if;

    put_house_edge(create(25,55));

    move(23,1);
    pause(0.7);
    exit;

  when deal =>
    pause(2.0);
    game_over;
    pause(2.0);
    goto start;

  when others =>
    null;

end case;

end loop;

end if;

game_over;

loop
  exit when button = deal;
end loop;

end loop;

```

end;

Current date is Wed 12-18-1985

Volume in drive C is HARD DISK
Directory of C:\LIBRARY

.	<DIR>	10-24-85	12:46p
..	<DIR>	10-24-85	12:46p
PLAYCARD LIB	1190	12-18-85	9:00p
PLAYCARD PKG	1399	12-18-85	9:00p
PLAYCARD SYM	2689	12-18-85	9:00p
PLAYCARD JRL	1392	12-18-85	9:01p
TOOLKIT LIB	603	12-18-85	9:00p
TOOLKIT PKG	2132	12-18-85	9:00p
TOOLKIT SYM	1936	12-18-85	9:01p
TOOLKIT JRL	2869	12-18-85	9:02p
UNIFORM LIB	227	12-18-85	9:00p
UNIFORM PKG	1066	12-18-85	9:00p
UNIFORM SYM	673	12-18-85	9:03p

UNIFORM	JRL	1525	12-18-85	9:03p
DEALING	LIB	850	12-18-85	9:00p
DEALING	PKG	3046	12-18-85	9:00p
DEALING	SYM	1877	12-18-85	9:03p
DEALING	JRL	3689	12-18-85	9:04p
GRAPHICS	LIB	1921	12-18-85	9:00p
GRAPHICS	PKG	7218	12-18-85	9:00p
GRAPHICS	SYM	5253	12-18-85	9:05p
GRAPHICS	JRL	9197	12-18-85	9:06p
SHOWCARD	LIB	316	12-18-85	9:00p
SHOWCARD	PKG	2559	12-18-85	9:00p
SHOWCARD	SYM	1366	12-18-85	9:07p
SHOWCARD	JRL	3252	12-18-85	9:08p

26 File(s) 7262208 bytes free

-- december 18, 1985 9:00 pm wednesday evening

_ package playcard is

type card_type is private;

type full_rank is (null_rank,deuce,trey,four,five,six,seven,eight,nine,ten,
jack,queen,king,ace,joker_rank);

type full_suit is (null_suit,hearts,clubs,diamonds,spades,joker_suit);

type full_color is (null_color,red,black,joker_color);

subtype rank_type is full_rank range deuce .. ace;

subtype suit_type is full_suit range hearts .. spades;

subtype color_type is full_color range red .. black;

function null_card return card_type;

function joker_card return card_type;

function create (rank : rank_type; suit : suit_type) return card_type;

function rank (card : card_type) return full_rank;

function suit (card : card_type) return full_suit;

function color (card : card_type) return full_color;

private

type card_type is

record

rank : full_rank;

suit : full_suit;

filler : byte; -- the compiler requires composite types which are
-- private to be at least 3 bytes long

end record;

end;

-- december 18, 1985 9:00 pm wednesday evening

package body playcard is

function null_card return card_type is
card : card_type;

begin

card.rank := null_rank;

card.suit := null_suit;

card.filler := byte(0);

return card;

end;

function joker_card return card_type is
card : card_type;

begin

card.rank := joker_rank;

card.suit := joker_suit;

```

    card.filler := byte(0);
    return card;
end;

function create (rank : rank_type; suit : suit_type) return card_type is
    card : card_type;
begin
    card.rank    := rank;
    card.suit    := suit;
    card.filler  := byte(0);
    return card;
end;

function rank (card : card_type) return full_rank is
begin
    return card.rank;
end;

function suit (card : card_type) return full_suit is
begin
    return card.suit;
end;

function color (card : card_type) return full_color is
    color : full_color;
begin
    case suit(card) is
        when null_suit => color := null_color;
        when hearts   => color := red;
        when clubs    => color := black;
        when diamonds => color := red;
        when spades   => color := black;
        when joker_suit => color := joker_color;
    - end case;
    return color;
end;

end;

-- december 18, 1985 9:00 pm wednesday evening

with text_io;

package toolkit is

    type Key_type is range 0 .. 9;

    subtype real is long_float;

    Keyboard : text_io.file_type;

    function key return Key_type;

    procedure space (number_of_spaces : natural);
    procedure space;

    procedure end_line;

    procedure skip (number_of_lines : natural);
    procedure skip;

    procedure sound;

    procedure pause (number_of_seconds : real);

    procedure pause;

    procedure halt;

    procedure fatal_error;

    procedure check (assertion : boolean);

end;

```

```
-- december 18, 1985 9:00 pm wednesday evening
```

```
with calendar, strlib, util;
```

```
use text_io;
```

```
package body toolkit is
```

```
  function Key return Key_type is
```

```
    input : character;
```

```
  begin
```

```
    loop
```

```
      get(Keyboard, input);
```

```
      exit when input in '0' .. '9';
```

```
    end loop;
```

```
    return Key_type(strlib.str_to_int(strlib.char_to_str(input)));
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure space (number_of_spaces : natural) is
```

```
  begin
```

```
    for a in 1 .. number_of_spaces loop
```

```
      put(' ');
```

```
    end loop;
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure space is
```

```
  begin
```

```
    space(1);
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure end_line is
```

```
  begin
```

```
    new_line;
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure skip (number_of_lines : natural) is
```

```
  begin
```

```
    for a in 1 .. number_of_lines loop
```

```
      new_line;
```

```
    end loop;
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure skip is
```

```
  begin
```

```
    skip(1);
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure sound is
```

```
  begin
```

```
    put(standard_output, ascii.bel);
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure pause (number_of_seconds : real) is
```

```
    use calendar;
```

```
    initial : constant day_duration := seconds(clock);
```

```
    current : day_duration;
```

```
    cumulative : duration;
```

```
  begin
```

```
    loop
```

```
      current := seconds(clock);
```

```
      if current >= initial then
```

```
        cumulative := current - initial;
```

```
      else
```

```
        cumulative := 24.0 * 60.0 * 60.0 - initial + current;
```

```
      end if;
```

```
      exit when cumulative >= number_of_seconds;
```

```
    end loop;
```

```
  end;
```

```
  procedure pause is
```

```
    dummy : character;
```

```
  begin
```

```
    put(standard_output, "press any key to continue ");
```

```
    get(Keyboard, dummy);
```

```

end;

procedure halt is
begin
    util.halt;
end;

procedure fatal_error is
begin
    sound;
    set_output(standard_output);
    new_line;
    put_line("a fatal error has occurred");
    put_line("a janus/ada error walkback will follow");
    pause;
    util.err_exit;
end;

procedure check (assertion : boolean) is
begin
    if not assertion then
        fatal_error;
    end if;
end;

begin
    open(keyboard,in_file,"KBD:");

end;
-- december 18, 1985  9:00 pm  wednesday evening

with toolkit;
use -toolkit;

with calendar,random;

package body uniform is

    procedure initialize (a,b,c : integer) is
    begin
        random.set_seed(a,b,c);
    end;

    procedure randomly_initialize is
    use calendar;
    datetime : constant time      := clock;
    year      : constant year_number := year(datetime);
    month      : constant month_number := month(datetime);
    day        : constant day_number  := day(datetime);
    seconds    : constant duration    := seconds(datetime);
    begin
        initialize(year + month + day,
                    integer(seconds / 3.0),
                    integer((seconds - real(integer(seconds))) * 10000.0));
    end;

    function generator (low,high : integer) return integer is
    answer : integer;
    begin
        check(low <= high);
        answer := low + integer(random.rand * real(high - low + 1) - 0.5);
        check(answer in low .. high);
        return answer;
    end;

begin
    initialize(0,0,0);

end;

```

```
-- december 18, 1985  9:00 pm  wednesday evening
```

```
package uniform is
```

```
  procedure initialize (a,b,c : integer);
```

```
  procedure randomly_initialize;
```

```
  function generator (low,high : integer) return integer;
```

```
end;
```

```
-- december 18, 1985  9:00 pm  wednesday evening
```

```
with playcard;
```

```
use playcard;
```

```
package dealing is
```

```
  deck_limit : constant := 20;
```

```
  subtype deck_range is integer range 1 .. deck_limit;
```

```
  procedure create (deuces,treys,fours,fives,sixes,sevens,eights,nines,tens,
                   jacks,queens,kings,aces,jokers : natural);
```

```
  procedure create_deck_with_joker;
```

```
  procedure create (decks : deck_range);
```

```
  procedure reset_deal;
```

```
  function deal return card_type;
```

```
--  the following three routines allow you to 'peek' at cards in the pack
--  that are not yet dealt. when these routines are used, no other routines
--  in this package should be called, until you are through peeking.
```

```
  procedure reset_peek;
```

```
  function more_to_peek return boolean;
```

```
  function peek return card_type;
```

```
end;
```

```
-- december 18, 1985  9:00 pm  wednesday evening
```

```
with toolkit,uniform;
```

```
use toolkit;
```

```
package body dealing is
```

```
  card_limit      : constant := 52 * deck_limit;
  pack            : array(1 .. card_limit) of card_type;
  number_of_cards : integer range 0 .. card_limit;
  previous_card_dealt : integer range 0 .. card_limit;
  previous_card_peeked : integer range 0 .. card_limit;
```

```
  procedure create (deuces,treys,fours,fives,sixes,sevens,eights,nines,tens,
                   jacks,queens,kings,aces,jokers : natural) is
```

```
    procedure insert (rank : rank_type; n : natural) is
      count : natural := 0;
```

```
    begin
```

```
      generate :
```

```
        while n >= 1 loop
```

```
          for suit in suit_type loop
```

```
            number_of_cards := number_of_cards + 1;
```

```
            pack(number_of_cards) := create(rank,suit);
```

```
            count := count + 1;
```

```
            exit generate when count = n;
```

```
          end loop;
```

```
        end loop generate;
```

```
    end;
```

```

begin
  for a in pack_range loop
    pack(a) := null_card;
  end loop;

  number_of_cards := 0;

  insert(deuce,deuces);
  insert(trey ,treys );
  insert(four ,fours );
  insert(five ,fives );
  insert(six  ,sixes );
  insert(seven,sevens);
  insert(eight,eights);
  insert(nine ,nines );
  insert(ten  ,tens  );
  insert(jack ,jacks );
  insert(queen,queens);
  insert(king ,kings );
  insert(ace  ,aces  );

  for a in 1 .. jokers loop
    number_of_cards := number_of_cards + 1;
    pack(number_of_cards) := joker_card;
  end loop;

  previous_card_dealt := 0;
end create;

procedure create_deck_with_joker is
begin
  create(4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,1);
end;

procedure create (decks : deck_range) is
  n : constant positive := 4 * decks;
begin
  create(n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,n,0);
end;

procedure reset_deal is
begin
  previous_card_dealt := 0;
end;

function deal return card_type is
  n      : constant integer range 1 .. number_of_cards :=
    previous_card_dealt + 1;
  pick   : constant integer range n .. number_of_cards :=
    uniform.generator(n,number_of_cards);
  temp   : card_type;
begin
  temp := pack(n);
  pack(n) := pack(pick);
  pack(pick) := temp;
  previous_card_dealt := n;
  return pack(n);
end;

procedure reset_peek is
begin
  check(previous_card_dealt in 0 .. number_of_cards);
  previous_card_peeked := previous_card_dealt;
end;

function more_to_peek return boolean is
begin
  return previous_card_peeked < number_of_cards;
end;

function peek return card_type is
begin

```

```

    check(more_to_peek);
    previous_card_peeked := previous_card_peeked + 1;
    return pack(previous_card_peeked);
end;

begin
    create(1);

end;

procedure blanks;
procedure single_line;
procedure double_line;

procedure box (position : position_type; height,width : positive);

procedure box (line : line_range; column : column_range;
               height,width : positive);

end;

-- december 18, 1985  9:00 pm  wednesday evening

with text_io;

package graphics is

    type character_range is range 0 .. 255;

    subtype line_range    is integer range 1 .. 25;
    subtype column_range is integer range 1 .. 80;

    type position_type is
        record
            line      : line_range;
            column    : column_range;
        end record;

    function create (line : line_range; column : column_range) return
        position_type;

    function cursor return position_type;

    procedure show (file : text_io.file_type; item : character_range);
    procedure show (item : character_range);

    procedure move (position : position_type);
    procedure move (line : line_range; column : column_range);

    procedure line  (line : line_range);
    procedure column (column : column_range);

    procedure up (number_of_lines : natural);
    procedure up;
    procedure down (number_of_lines : natural);
    procedure down;
    procedure forward (number_of_columns : natural);
    procedure forward;
    procedure backward (number_of_columns : natural);
    procedure backward;

    procedure bold;
    procedure underline;
    procedure blink;
    procedure reverse_video;
    procedure set (bold,underline,blink,reverse_video : boolean);
    procedure normal;

    procedure conceal;

    procedure erase_line;
    procedure erase_display;

    procedure save_graphics;
    procedure restore_graphics;

```

```

procedure save_cursor;
procedure restore_cursor;

procedure set (vertical, horizontal, upper_left, upper_right, lower_left,
              lower_right, interior : character_range);
    buffer : string(8) := " ";
begin
    escape("[6n");
    for a in 1 .. 8 loop
        get(keyboard, buffer(a));
    end loop;
    if buffer(1) = ascii_esc and buffer(2) = '[' and buffer(5) = ';' and
       buffer(8) = 'R' then
        return create(str_to_int(extract(buffer, 3, 2)),
                      str_to_int(extract(buffer, 6, 2)));
    else
        end_line;
        normal;
        put_line(buffer);
        fatal_error;
    end if;
end;

procedure show (file : file_type; item : character_range) is
begin
    pragma rangecheck(off);
    put(file, character_val(item));
    pragma rangecheck(on);
end;

procedure show (item : character_range) is
begin
    show(current_output, item);
end;

procedure move (position : position_type) is
begin
    escape("[I" & int_to_str(position.line) & ";" &
          int_to_str(position.column) & "H");
end;

procedure move (line : line_range; column : column_range) is
begin
    move(create(line, column));
end;

procedure line (line : line_range) is
begin
    move(line, cursor.column);
end;

procedure column (column : column_range) is
begin
    move(cursor.line, column);
end;

procedure up (number_of_lines : natural) is
begin
    case number_of_lines is
        when 0 => null;
        when others => escape("[I" & int_to_str(number_of_lines) & "A");
    end case;
end;

procedure up is
begin
    up(1);
end;

procedure down (number_of_lines : natural) is
begin

```

```

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with toolkit;
use toolkit;

with strlib;
use strlib;

use text_io;

package body graphics is

  max : constant := 4;

  type stack_range is range 1 .. max;

  type graphics_state_type is
    record
      bold      : boolean;
      underline  : boolean;
      blink     : boolean;
      reverse_video : boolean;
    end record;

  stack : array(stack_range) of graphics_state_type;
  n      : stack_range := 1;

  vertical      : character_range;
  horizontal    : character_range;
  upper_left    : character_range;
  upper_right   : character_range;
  lower_left    : character_range;
  lower_right   : character_range;
  interior      : character_range;

  procedure escape (sequence : string) is
  begin
    put(standard_output,ascii.esc);
    put(standard_output,sequence);
  end;

  procedure transmit is
    s : string := "[0";
  begin
    if stack(n).bold      then s := s & ";1"; end if;
    if stack(n).underline then s := s & ";4"; end if;
    if stack(n).blink     then s := s & ";5"; end if;
    if stack(n).reverse_video then s := s & ";7"; end if;
    escape(s & "m");
  end;

  function create (line : line_range; column : column_range) return
    position_type is
    position : position_type;
  begin
    position.line := line;
    position.column := column;
    return position;
  end;

  function cursor return position_type is
  case number_of_lines is
    when 0 => null;
    when others => escape("[ " & int_to_str(number_of_lines) & "B");
  end case;
end;

procedure down is
begin
  down(1);
end;

procedure forward (number_of_columns : natural) is
begin

```

```

    case number_of_columns is
        when 0 => null;
        when others => escape "[" & int_to_str(number_of_columns) & "C";
    end case;
end;

procedure forward is
begin
    forward(1);
end;

procedure backward (number_of_columns : natural) is
begin
    case number_of_columns is
        when 0 => null;
        when others => escape "[" & int_to_str(number_of_columns) & "D";
    end case;
end;

procedure backward is
begin
    backward(1);
end;

procedure bold is
begin
    stack(n).bold := true;
    escape "[1m";
end;

procedure underline is
begin
    stack(n).underline := true;
    escape "[4m";
end;

procedure blink is
begin
    stack(n).blink := true;
    escape "[5m";
end;

procedure reverse_video is
begin
    stack(n).reverse_video := true;
    escape "[7m";
end;

procedure set (bold,underline,blink,reverse_video : boolean) is
begin
    stack(n).bold := bold;
    stack(n).underline := underline;
    stack(n).blink := blink;
    stack(n).reverse_video := reverse_video;
    transmit;
end;

procedure normal is
begin
    set(false,false,false,false);
end;

procedure conceal is
begin
    save_graphics;
    escape "[0;8m";
end;

procedure erase_line is
begin
    escape "[K";
end;

procedure erase_display is

```

```

begin
  escape("[2J");
end;

procedure save_graphics is
begin
  n := n + 1;
  stack(n) := stack(n - 1);
end;

procedure restore_graphics is
begin
  n := n - 1;
  transmit;
end;

procedure save_cursor is
begin
  escape("[s");
end;

procedure restore_cursor is
begin
  escape("[u");
end;

procedure set (vertical, horizontal, upper_left, upper_right, lower_left,
               lower_right, interior : character_range) is
begin
  graphics.vertical      := vertical;
  graphics.horizontal    := horizontal;
  graphics.upper_left    := upper_left;
  graphics.upper_right   := upper_right;
  graphics.lower_left    := lower_left;
  graphics.lower_right   := lower_right;
  graphics.interior      := interior;
end;

procedure blanks is
begin
  set(32,32,32,32,32,32,32);
end;

procedure single_line is
begin
  set(179,196,218,191,192,217,32);
end;

procedure double_line is
begin
  set(186,205,201,187,200,188,32);
end;

procedure box (position : position_type; height, width : positive) is
  line : string;

  procedure set (left, middle, right : character_range) is
  begin
    pragma rangecheck(off);
    line := char_to_str(character'val(left));
    for a in 1 .. width - 2 loop
      line := line & char_to_str(character'val(middle));
    end loop;
    line := line & char_to_str(character'val(right));
    pragma rangecheck(on);
  end;

begin
  move(position);
  set(upper_left, horizontal, upper_right);
  put(line);

```

```

    set(vertical,interior,vertical);
    for a in 1 .. height - 2 loop
        move(position.line + a,position.column);
        put(line);
    end loop;

    move(position.line + height - 1,position.column);
    set(lower_left,horizontal,lower_right);
    put(line);

end;

procedure box (line : line_range; column : column_range;
               height,width : positive) is
begin
    box(create(line,column),height,width);
end;

begin
    normal;
    erase_display;
    single_line;

end;
-- december 18, 1985  9:00 pm  wednesday evening

with graphics,playcard;
use graphics,playcard;

package showcard is

    procedure card_back (position : position_type);
    procedure logo_back (position : position_type);
    procedure card_front (position : position_type; card : card_type);

end;
-- december 18, 1985  9:00 pm  wednesday evening

with text_io;
use text_io;

package body showcard is

    procedure card_back (position : position_type) is
    begin
        move(position);
        for a in 1 .. 7 loop
            show(220);
        end loop;

        for a in 1 .. 3 loop
            move(position.line + a,position.column);
            for b in 1 .. 7 loop
                show(219);
            end loop;
        end loop;

        move(position.line + 4,position.column);
        for a in 1 .. 7 loop
            show(223);
        end loop;

    end;
end;
```

```

procedure logo_back (position : position_type) is
begin
  card_back(position);
  save_graphics;
  reverse_video;
  move(position.line + 1, position.column); put(" Mid- ");
  move(position.line + 2, position.column); put(" Games,");
  move(position.line + 3, position.column); put(" Inc. ");
  restore_graphics;
end;

function image (rank : rank_type) return string(2) is
  image : string(2);
begin
  case rank is
    when deuce => image := "2 ";
    when trey  => image := "3 ";
    when four  => image := "4 ";
    when five  => image := "5 ";
    when six   => image := "6 ";
    when seven => image := "7 ";
    when eight => image := "8 ";
    when nine  => image := "9 ";
    when ten   => image := "10";
    when jack  => image := "J ";
    when queen => image := "Q ";
    when king  => image := "K ";
    when ace   => image := "A ";
  end case;
  return image;
end;

function image (suit : suit_type) return character is
  image : character;
begin
  case suit is
    when hearts  => image := character'val(3);
    when diamonds => image := character'val(4);
    when clubs   => image := character'val(5);
    when spades  => image := character'val(6);
  end case;
  return image;
end;

procedure card_front (position : position_type; card : card_type) is
begin
  double_line;
  box(position, 5, 7);
  move(position.line + 2, position.column + 3); put(image(rank(card)));
  move(position.line + 1, position.column + 1); put(image(suit(card)));
  forward(3);
  move(position.line + 3, position.column + 1); put(image(suit(card)));
  forward(3);
end;
end;

```

What I claim is:

1. A method of playing a casino-type draw poker game using a computer and video screen wherein five card hands are ranked from low to high in order of high card, pair, two-pair, three-of-a-kind, straight, flush, full house, four-of-a-kind and straight flush, which comprises the steps of:

- (a) a player registering a first wager with said computer;
- (b) said computer randomly generating and displaying five cards from a pool comprising elements corresponding to a standard 52 playing card deck, said five cards forming a first hand;
- (c) said player directing said computer to discard up to five cards from said first hand;
- (d) said computer randomly generating and displaying a replacement card, from a balance of cards in

- 50 said pool, for each card discarded from said first hand, said replacement cards and undiscarded cards from said first hand forming a second hand;
- (e) said computer comparing a rank of said second hand to an odds chart to determine if said player has lost or won an amount based on said first wager;
- 55 (f) said computer offering said player an opportunity to register a second wager if there is a possibility of a third hand having a rank of straight or higher, said third hand being the highest ranking five card hand which can be made using said second hand and a sixth card randomly generated from a balance of cards in said pool;
- 60 (g) if a possibility of said third hand having a rank of straight or higher exists, said player electing to terminate said game or to register said second
- 65

wager with said computer;

(h) if said player registers said second wager, said computer randomly generating said sixth card from a balance of cards in said pool; and

(i) said computer comparing a rank of said third hand to said odds chart to determine if said player has lost or won an amount based on said second wager.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said election to make a second wager is offered only if said sixth card would also create the possibility of said third hand having a rank higher than said second hand.

3. A method according to claim 2, wherein said odds chart is varied depending on the rank of said second hand.

4. A method of playing a casino-type draw poker game wherein five card hands are ranked from low to high in order of high card, pair, two-pair, three-of-a-kind, straight, flush, full house, four-of-a-kind and straight flush, which comprises the steps of:

(a) a player placing a first wager on a playing table;

(b) said player being dealt five random cards from a pool comprising a standard 52 playing card deck, said five cards forming a first hand;

(c) said player choosing to discard up to five cards from said first hand;

(d) said player being randomly dealt a replacement card from a balance of cards in said pool, for each card discarded from said first hand, said replace-

ment cards and undiscarded cards from said first hand forming a second hand;

(e) comparing a rank of said second hand to an odds chart to determine if said player has lost or won an amount based on said first wager;

(f) said player being offered an opportunity to place a second wager if there is a possibility of a third hand having a rank of straight or higher, said third hand being the highest ranking five card hand which can be made using said second hand and a sixth card randomly dealt from a balance of cards in said pool;

(g) if a possibility of said third hand having a rank of straight or higher exists, said player electing to terminate said game or to place said second wager

on said playing table;

(h) if said player places said second wager, said player being randomly dealt said sixth card from a balance of cards in said pool; and

(i) comparing a rank of said third hand to said odds chart to determine if said player has lost or won an amount based on said second wager.

5. A method according to claim 4, wherein said election to make a second wager is offered only if said sixth card would also create the possibility of said third hand having a rank higher than said second hand.

6. A method according to claim 5, wherein said odds chart is varied depending on the rank of said second hand.

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B. U.S. Patent No. 5,816,575 to Keller, filed on Jun 9, 1997

See, e.g., column 2, lines 18-22



US005816575A

United States Patent [19]
Keller

[11] **Patent Number:** **5,816,575**
[45] **Date of Patent:** **Oct. 6, 1998**

[54] **EXPANDED BLACKJACK CARD GAME AND METHOD**

[75] Inventor: **David R. Keller**, Las Vegas, Nev.

[73] Assignee: **Harry M. Weiss**, Las Vegas, Nev.

[21] Appl. No.: **871,829**

[22] Filed: **Jun. 9, 1997**

[51] **Int. Cl.⁶** **A63F 1/00**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **273/292**

[58] **Field of Search** 273/274, 292,
273/303, 305

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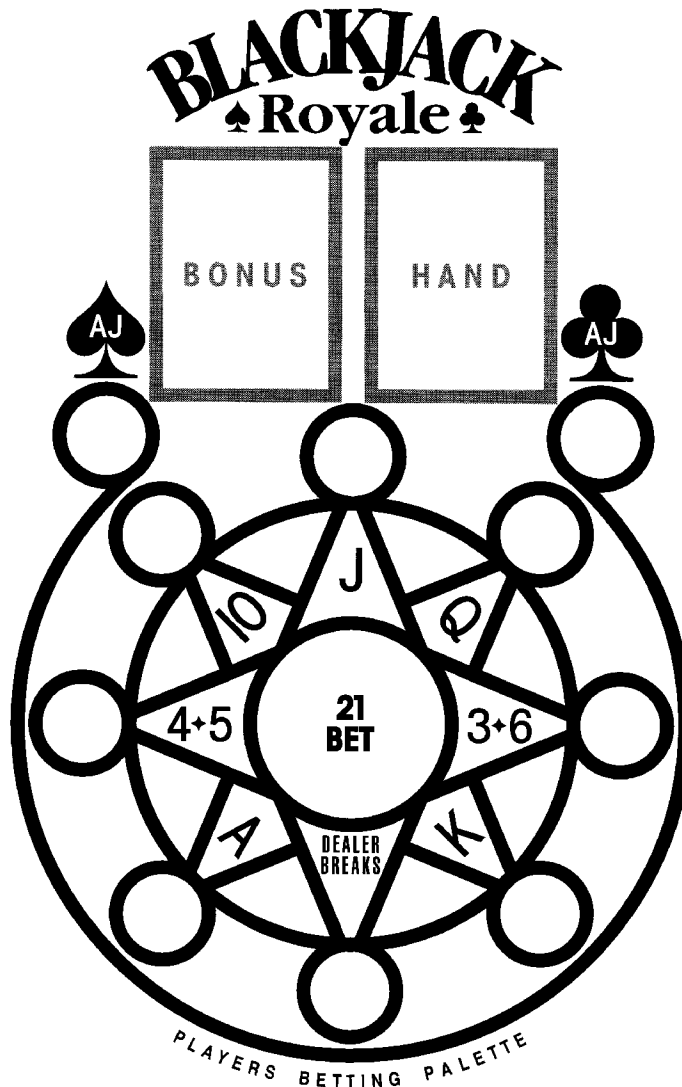
Primary Examiner—William E. Stoll

Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Harry M. Weiss; Jeffrey D. Moy;
Harry M. Weiss & Associates, P.C.

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A new type of Blackjack (21) game, table and method is disclosed wherein a number of betting options are provided for the Blackjack player. In addition to the standard betting option against the Dealer, a Dealer Bust option, a jackpot option where the Blackjack player can obtain over 1,000 to 1 return payout and several other betting options are provided to bet on various possible cards such as receiving a 3 or a 6, a 4 or 5, a 10, Jack Queen, King or Ace for one or both of the initial two cards.

84 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



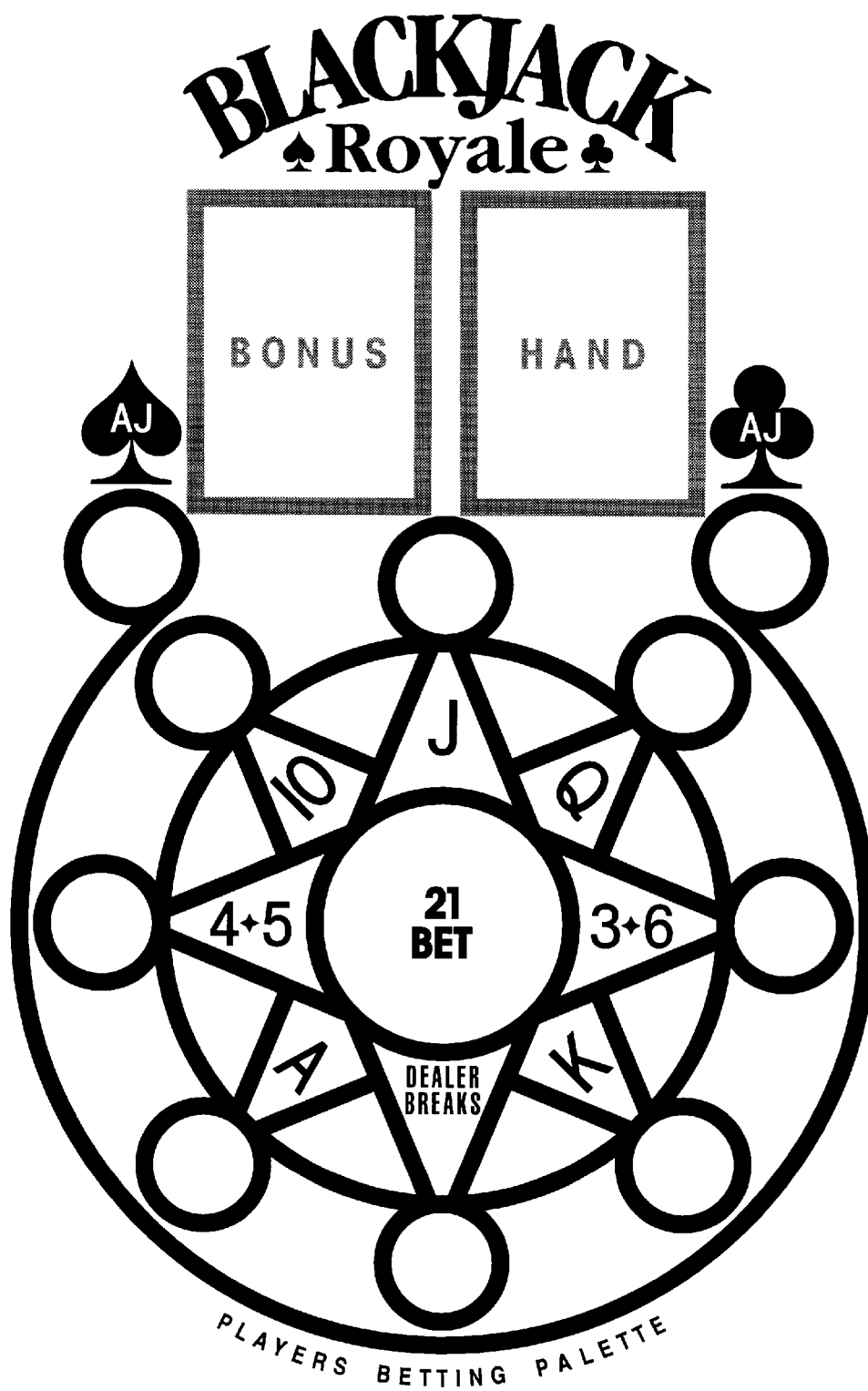
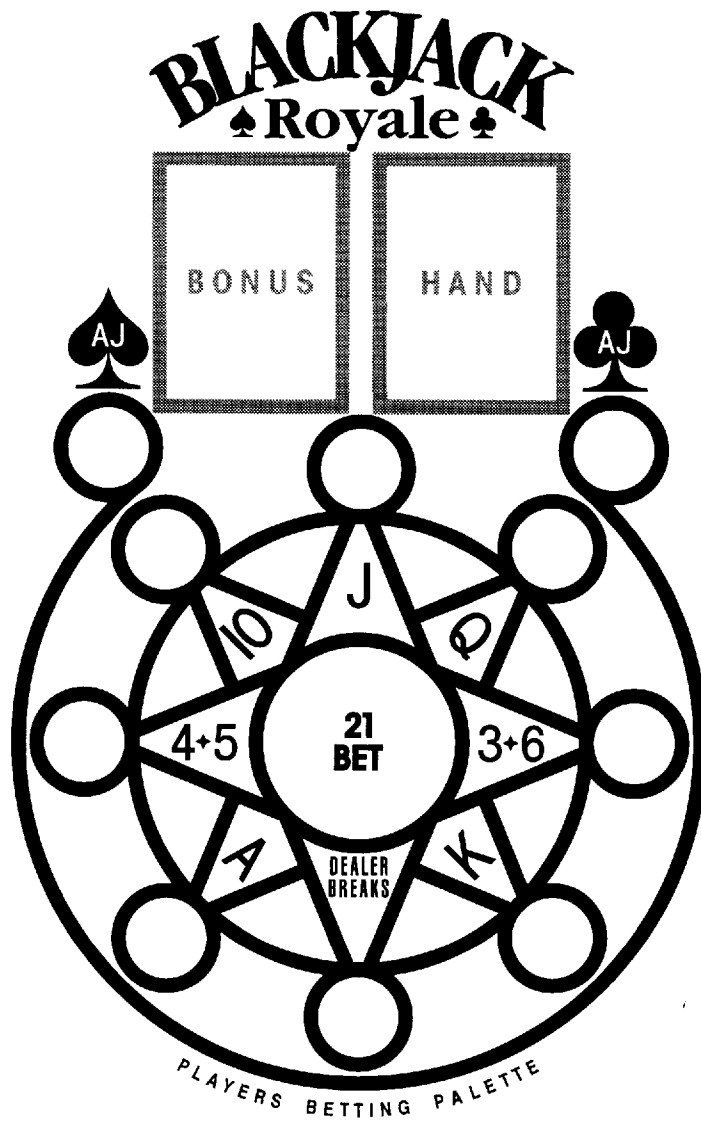


Fig. 1



BONUS HAND PAYOUTS

♠ AJ Spades _____ 1250 to 1

♣ AJ Clubs _____ 1250 to 1

10 J Q K A

One _____ 5 to 1

Paired _____ 25 to 1

4+5 or 3+6

One _____ 2 to 1

Two _____ 8 to 1

DEALER BREAKS _____ 5 to 2

Fig. 2

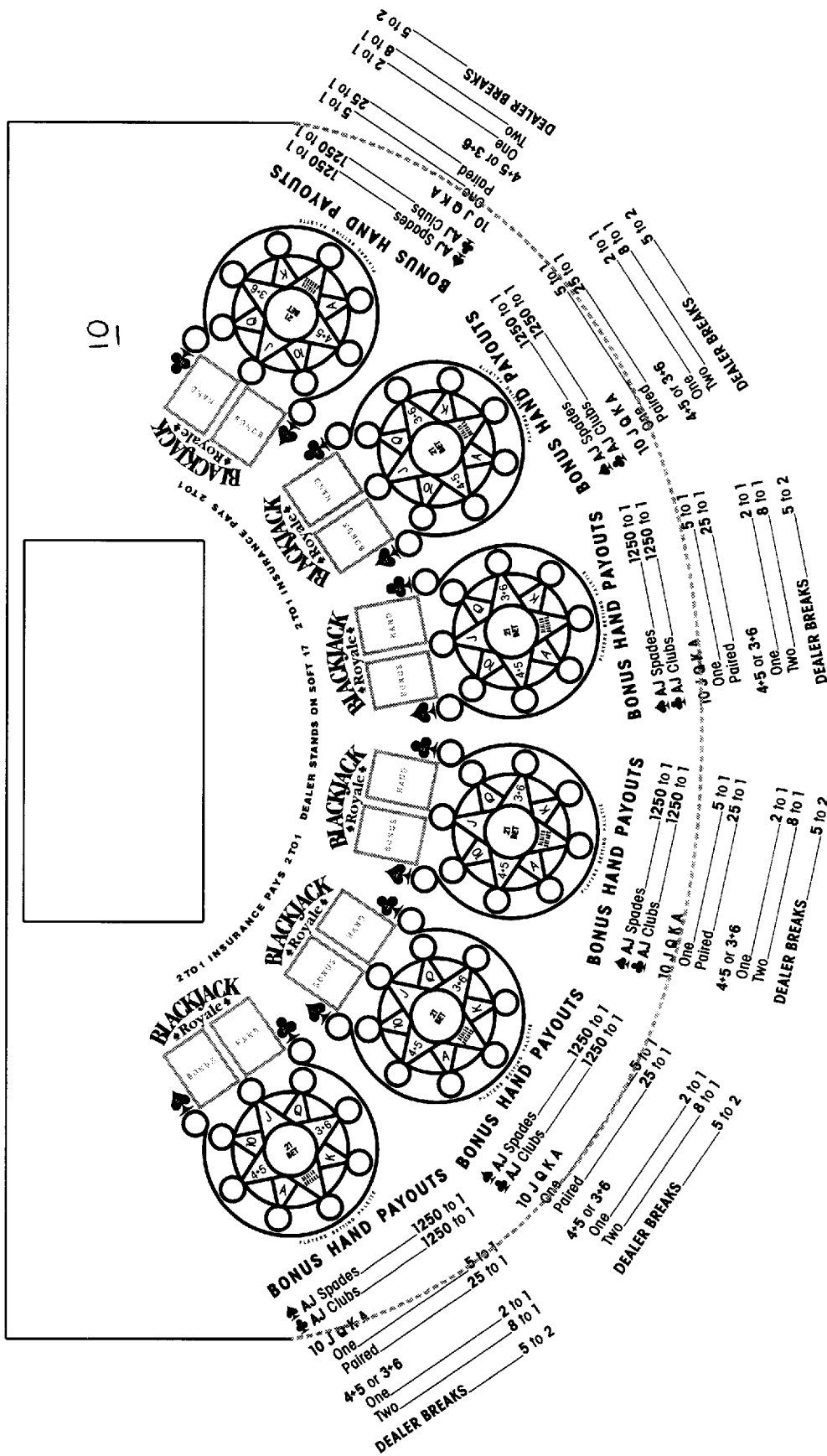


Fig. 3

EXPANDED BLACKJACK CARD GAME AND METHOD

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention generally relates to card games and methods therefor and, more particularly, to Blackjack card games and methods therefor.

BACKGROUND OF THE PRIOR ART

In the past, various card games have been developed for social and gambling or gaming type uses.

A popular card game, especially for gambling or gaming uses is the card game known as Blackjack (or "21") wherein a blackjack player plays against a Dealer and the object is to beat the Dealer by either "Standing" or "Sticking" (not drawing a card that might cause the Blackjack player to "Bust" (go over 21) and hope that the Dealer will "Bust") or by receiving a cumulative point card total higher than the Dealer from the Blackjack player's received playing cards being as close to 21 as possible with 21 being the maximum permissible score. In other words, if the Blackjack player and Dealer each achieve a total not exceeding 21, then the highest total wins the bet. Blackjack is relatively simple to understand and is usually a faster and easier card game to play than, for example, the game of Poker, therefore, Blackjack, which can be played with the Dealer and only one Blackjack player, is, in most Casinos, even more popular than the conventional game of Poker which needs to be played with several players because each of the Poker players are competing against each other for one "pot" whereas each Blackjack player can win against the one Dealer. Thus, this game includes a Dealer and at least one Blackjack player. One or more Blackjack players playing against the Dealer are, in effect, individually competing to try to either obtain a better card score (for multiple playing cards that they are dealt) than the Dealer or to "Stick" or "Stand" after receiving a minimum of 2 cards and hope that the Dealer will "Bust". For example, Blackjack players seeing one of the two Dealer's initial cards which is turned up may decide not to draw any additional card because they will win the bet if the Dealer has to hit (the Dealer is required to draw if their point total is 16 or less) and the Dealer "Busts" (goes over 21). Blackjack players also have the option of splitting any pairs (i.e. a pair of 10s, a pair of 9s, etc.) Blackjack players have several options such as to double down (double their bet and receive only one more card), double their bet when they split a pair of cards, and can receive a 1.5 times their bet return if they receive an Ace and a 10 or picture card for their other card. A Blackjack player receiving a card score of more than 21 points has the so called "Bust" hand and automatically loses to the Dealer (and vice versa). The Dealer, after receiving the first 2 cards begins drawing one or more cards (if the first 2 cards are 16 or less) but only after each of the Blackjack players at the Dealer's table have completely played their hand. Therefore, the "House" or casino has the advantage because the Blackjack player or players must play and complete their hand first or before the Dealer. The Blackjack players at the table individually playing against the Dealer and also the Dealer must receive a minimum of 2 cards. Each of the Blackjack players individually playing against the Dealer (who is a representative of the "House" or Casino) have the option of "Sticking" after the receipt of their 2 initial cards which means that they will not receive any other cards or to draw one or more other cards from the Dealer and to continue

until they are either satisfied with their card count score and stop drawing cards ("Sticking") or they have "Busted" (gone over the 21 point total). As is known in the Blackjack card game, picture cards (Jacks, Queens and Kings) each have a point card value of 10 points while Aces have a point card value of either 1 point or 11 points. The other cards namely 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, 6s, 7s, 8s, 9s, and 10s have a point card value equivalent to their face card value (i.e. respectively 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10). In all gaming or Casino establishments, Dealers have to draw when they receive a point card value of 16 or less and, in some Casinos or gaming establishments, when they receive a point card value of 17 or less where the 17 point card value is based upon using an Ace as an 11 point card value with one or more other cards (this is known as a "Soft 17"). While Blackjack or 21 is a relatively fast card game, this game is not very dynamic and becomes very boring when played for an extended period of time. For example, new younger Blackjack players are finding the game of 21 very boring because they have enjoyed the excitement of playing action packed video games and thus need more options and variations in the manner that 21 is now being played. Because of the small percentage difference in the odds of playing Blackjack against a Dealer (with only a few percentage points in favor of the Dealer (or the House)), the same (gaming) chip or chips are often passed from the Blackjack player to the Dealer (when the Blackjack player loses) and from the Dealer to the Blackjack player (when the Dealer loses to the Blackjack player). This passing chips back and forth routine will sometimes last for relatively long periods of time until either the Blackjack player starts losing more often than winning because of a streak of bad luck or because of the percentage of odds in favor of the Dealer (or the House) or because the Blackjack player receives a run of good luck and wins more hands against the Dealer over a somewhat limited period of time. Blackjack players faced with losing several bets in a row will often become upset and will seek to recoup their losses quickly by significantly increasing the amount of their bet. This often results in the Blackjack player losing even greater amounts of money and at a faster rate of loss.

As a result, the game of Blackjack, as it is presently played, is tedious (because there is usually one betting option—to beat the Dealer by either receiving a higher point score or to hope that the Dealer will "Bust") and does not generate much excitement or enthusiasm for the Blackjack player. Other betting options are needed for the Blackjack player other than to significantly increase the bet. Thus a Blackjack game is needed which would permit the Blackjack player to have a chance to win a large bet (as an option after losing a number of conventional bets to the Dealer) without the risk of losing a large bet that was the only previous option to try to promptly recoup a series of lost bets to the Dealer.

Attempts have been made to vary the game of Blackjack to a relatively minor degree wherein a Blackjack player could have more than one betting option (other than the Blackjack player's bet to receive a higher card total (not more than the maximum of 21) than the Dealer or to hope the Dealer "Busts"). However, these other attempts have not been successful because they do not provide a multitude of very exciting betting options combined with a large jackpot type of payout. U.S. Pat. No. 5,454,570 to Karal discloses a Blackjack card game method wherein a Blackjack player has extended wagering opportunities after the Blackjack player's hand has reached a desired card count value. Specifically, the Blackjack player can bet on whether the Dealer will achieve a card count that would be higher (but

not greater than 21) than the Blackjack player's hand. This supplemental bet or wager by the Blackjack player is prior to the Dealer revealing the Dealer's face down card. Predetermined odds on the different possible Dealer hand combinations are selected by the Blackjack player by the selection of the point card value of the Dealer's hand. Also, the Blackjack player can wager on the point card value of the Dealer's only face down card. Furthermore, the Blackjack player can bet on the point card value of the third Dealer card, etc. The odds presented in this U.S. Patent range from 10 to 1 (on an Ace being the Dealer down card or the next card to be drawn by the Dealer). Picture cards including 10s have a 2 to 1 betting ratio.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,275,416 to Schorr et al. also discloses a Blackjack card game method wherein a Blackjack player can bet on the Dealer's hand, the Blackjack player's hand or for a tie in the point count between the Dealer and the Blackjack player. The bet for the tie pays 9 to 1, the bet for the Blackjack player's hand is even money (1 for 1), and the bet on the Dealer's hand is 5 for 6 (five chips can be won on a 6 chip bet).

U.S. Pat. No. 5,174,579 to Griffiths discloses a Blackjack card game method wherein a separate bet can be made on whether the Dealer obtains exactly 21 or Busts. Disclosed therein is a discussion of Royal Match 21 involving a separate bet by the Blackjack player to have their 2 initial cards be of the same suit (i.e. clubs, diamonds, hearts and spades). A higher payout is for when the Ace and King is received by the Blackjack player in the same suit for the 2 initial cards, but there is no separate bet for the receipt of these two cards (only a payout if they happen to be received when a bet is made for the receipt of 2 initial cards of the same suit). Also disclosed therein is a reference to the U.S. Pat. No. 4,861,041 to Jones et al. wherein a separate bet is made to be eligible for certain specific jackpot hands (i.e. four 5s and an Ace or Ace, Two, Three, Four, Five and Six). Simply stated, prior attempts at providing more than one betting option to the Blackjack player did not give the Blackjack player an opportunity to bet and win a very large bonus (i.e. more than a thousand chips for each chip bet) as well as to bet on many different possible combinations that would pay more than a one chip payback for each one chip bet, but yet still provide the Blackjack player with, if desired, a straight bet to beat the Dealer.

Accordingly, a need existed for providing a new, exciting Blackjack card game and method that would provide a large (more than a thousand chips for each chip bet) jackpot betting option for the Blackjack player plus several other multiple times (from at least 2 to 1 to about 25 to 1) betting opportunities as well as other betting options including the basic straight (1 chip return or win per 1 chip) bet to beat the Dealer. Thus, there is a need for a dynamic Blackjack game that would provide a Blackjack player with three general type betting options (1) multiple bonus betting opportunities, (2) a bet for the Dealer to "Bust" and (3) a bet to beat the Dealer. Also, a need existed for a Blackjack game that would permit a Blackjack player to both, in effect, beat the Dealer and to bet on receiving what is considered to be bad or poor initial (2) cards and thereby have the double chance to win both bets (the bet on receiving the bad cards and the bet that whatever cards that were received (including the bad cards) would beat the Dealer. Consequently, a Blackjack player could, in effect, bet and win on receiving a negative type hand (2 bad initial cards) plus have the opportunity to win against the Dealer with these bad cards. This provides a betting option for Blackjack players who are on somewhat of a negative streak (receiving bad cards in

repeated hands) as contrasted for receiving positive type cards (10s, Js, Qs, Ks or Aces). A further need existed for a Blackjack game wherein multiple betting options are provided for a Blackjack player wherein different betting options can all be interrelated with the same goal of receiving the best bet return such as by using part of the bet for a straight win against the Dealer, another portion of the bet to receive certain initial cards (multiple chip return bonus bets) while still having a chance to beat the Dealer and, if desired, a bet on the Dealer going Bust.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of this invention to provide an improved Blackjack card game and method.

It is a further object of this invention to provide an improved Blackjack card game and method that provides a Blackjack player with multiple betting options.

It is a still further object of this invention to provide an improved Blackjack card game and method that provides a Blackjack player with multiple betting options with each betting option providing a payback of more than a conventional one for one payback in a conventional Blackjack game.

It is another object of this invention to provide an improved Blackjack card game and method that provides a Blackjack player with a jackpot betting option wherein the Blackjack player can receive a winning return of more than 1,000 times the amount bet by the Blackjack player.

It is still another object of this invention to provide an improved Blackjack card game and method that provides a Blackjack player with multiple betting options with each betting option providing a payback, depending on the option selected and bet on, of from 2 times to over 1,000 times the amount bet by the Blackjack player.

It is still another object of this invention to provide an improved Blackjack card game and method that provides a Blackjack player with multiple betting options with a number of betting options providing a payback, depending on the option selected and bet on, of from 2 times to over 1,000 times the amount bet by the Blackjack player and with other betting options including a straight forward Blackjack player win option wherein the Blackjack player will receive a one for one return if they win (unless they receive a two card 21 dealt pair of cards where they would receive one and a half times their wager) and also a Dealer bust option where the Blackjack player will receive a 5 to 2 return if they bet for the Dealer to go Bust. In this bet, the Dealer cards are played out even if the Blackjack player or players playing against the Dealer have also received a Bust hand.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In accordance with one embodiment of this invention, a method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer is disclosed comprising the step of: providing a Blackjack player with a jackpot betting option to make a bet and have a possibility of winning more than one thousand times the bet made by the Blackjack player.

In accordance With another embodiment of this invention, a method of playing Blackjack against the Dealer is disclosed comprising the step of: providing a Blackjack player with separate betting options to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5, one of a 3 and 6 and a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

In accordance with still another embodiment of this invention, a method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer is disclosed comprising the step of: providing a Blackjack player with separate betting options to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 and one of a 3 and 6.

In accordance with a still further embodiment of this invention, a method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer is disclosed comprising the step of: providing a Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5.

In accordance with a still further embodiment of this invention, a Blackjack card game is disclosed comprising in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of the Blackjack card table; the betting layout comprising a betting region for a Blackjack player to make a jackpot bet having a possibility of winning more than one thousand times the bet made by the Blackjack player.

In accordance with another embodiment of this invention, a Blackjack card game is disclosed comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of the Blackjack card table; the betting layout comprising separate betting regions for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5, one of a 3 and 6 and a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

In accordance with still another embodiment of this invention, a Blackjack card game is disclosed comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of the Blackjack card table; the betting layout comprising a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 and another separate region for the Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6.

In accordance with a still further embodiment of this invention, a Blackjack card game is disclosed comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of the Blackjack card table; the betting layout comprising a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5.

In accordance with a further embodiment of this invention, a Blackjack card game is disclosed comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of the Blackjack card table; the betting layout comprising a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6.

In accordance with another embodiment of this invention, a Blackjack card game is disclosed comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of the Blackjack card table; the betting layout comprising separate betting regions for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to a selected one for each of the separate betting regions of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

In accordance with still another embodiment of this invention, a method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer is disclosed comprising the step of: providing a Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

The foregoing and other objects, features and advantages of this invention will be apparent from the following more particular description of the preferred embodiments of the invention as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top view of a player's betting palette located on a table of the Blackjack game and using the method of this invention.

FIG. 2 is a top view similar to the top view of FIG. 1 illustrating the player's betting palette of FIG. 1 plus a listing of bonus hand payouts available to a Blackjack player betting on one or more betting places shown in the player's betting palette located on a table of the Blackjack game and using the method of this invention.

FIG. 3 is a top view similar to the top view of FIGS. 1 and 2 illustrating several (six) players' betting palettes identical to the player's betting palette as shown in FIG. 1 and also illustrating a listing of the bonus hand payouts as shown in FIG. 2 for each of the players betting palettes as they are located on a table of the Blackjack game and using the method of this invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECIFICATION

Referring to FIG. 1, a player's betting palette is shown as located on a surface of a Blackjack game or table. The player's betting palette shown in FIG. 1 comprises a number of different betting options for a Blackjack player. To achieve the highest possible payout a Blackjack player can place a bet in either or both circular region or regions below a spade symbol (with the AJ (Ace Jack) designation therein) and/or a club symbol (with the AJ (Ace Jack) designation therein). The Blackjack player's first two initial cards are preferably located in the BONUS HAND regions with preferably one of the first two initial cards in one of these BONUS HAND regions and the other one of the first two initial cards in the other of these BONUS HAND regions. Throughout the Blackjack game and method of this invention, it is preferable to focus on the first two initial cards since in many cases there are no more cards dealt to the Blackjack player, than the required minimum of the two initial cards dealt by a Dealer to the Blackjack player. Thus, most payouts for the Blackjack game and method of this invention are directed to the results obtained by the first two initial cards received by the Blackjack player even though the Blackjack player may decide to receive one or more additional cards from the Dealer. The same general rules that are applied to the conventional game of Blackjack also apply to the Blackjack game and method of this invention plus the additional betting options that are provided in the Blackjack game and method of this invention. Thus, the object of the Blackjack game and method of this invention is still to beat the Dealer (or have the Dealer go Bust with the Blackjack player still in the game) and/or to bet on different betting options as set out in the player's betting palette of FIG. 1.

As described above, a bet in either or both of the circular regions associated with the Ace Jack of spades or Ace Jack of clubs means that the Blackjack player is making a bet that the two initial cards that the Blackjack player receives is the

Ace and Jack of spades (for the bet placed in the circular region below the Ace Jack in the spade symbol) and/or the Ace and Jack of clubs (if a bet is placed in the circular region below the Ace Jack in the club symbol). Hence, a Blackjack player can bet in either of these “jackpot” circular regions or in both, if desired. The payback for winning for each of these “jackpot” circular regions is the same as the percentages of obtaining such a combination of two cards (in either order of receipt) for each “jackpot” circular region is the same.

With reference to FIG. 2, the payback is shown for each “jackpot” circular region. Consequently, a One Dollar bet, for example, in the “jackpot” circular region associated with the Ace Jack of spades preferably pays \$1,250 (or 1250 to 1) if this Ace Jack (spades) combination for the two initial cards for the Blackjack player is received. Correspondingly, a One Dollar bet in the “jackpot” circular region associated with the Ace Jack of clubs will pay back the Blackjack player with preferably a \$1,250 return (1250 to 1) if this Ace Jack (clubs) combination for the two initial cards is received by the Blackjack player.

As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, a bet placed in the circular region pointed to by the arrow shaped region that contains an A (Ace), or a K (King) or a Q (Queen), or a J (Jack), or a 10 (ten) means that the Blackjack player is placing a bet that the Blackjack player will receive at least one of the two initially received (by the Blackjack player) cards that corresponds to the particular card designation (Ace, King, Queen, Jack or Ten) that is selected by the Blackjack player by placing a bet in the associated circular region. As shown in FIG. 2 a selected single Ten, Jack, Queen, King or Ace received (for either one of the two initial cards received by the Blackjack player) will result in a payback of 5 to 1 which means that the Blackjack player will receive back Five Dollars for each One Dollar bet to receive that card for one of the two initially received cards. However, for the same, for example, One Dollar bet to receive a Ten, Jack, Queen, King or Ace (depending upon which card is selected and bet in the associated circular region by the Blackjack player) a payback of \$25 (25 to 1) is achieved if both initial cards are the same numbered card designation of a Ten, Jack, Queen, King or Ace. Hence, a pair of Tens, a pair of Jacks, a pair of Queens, a pair of Kings or a pair of Aces will result in a 25 to 1 payback for the occurrence of this situation if the bet is placed in the appropriate selected circular region.

Selection of receipt of either a 4 or 5 as one of the two initial cards to be received by the Blackjack player (if this is bet on by the Blackjack player) will result in a 2 to 1 payback (Two Dollars for each One Dollar that is bet). If both cards are a 4 or 5 (i.e. two 4s, two 5s or one 4 and one 5) this will result in a payback of 8 to 1 or Eight Dollars for each One Dollar that is bet. Correspondingly, receipt of either a 3 or 6 as one of the two initially received cards that are received by the Blackjack player will result in a 2 to 1 payback if this selection or option is bet by the Blackjack player. Receipt of two 3s, two 6s or one 3 and one 6 as the two initial cards received by the Blackjack player will result in a payback of 8 to 1 like the above described payback odds associated with the 4 and/or 5 selection.

The player's betting palette also illustrates a central circular region for the Blackjack player to place a straight one for one bet to beat the Dealer (this bet can also be won if the Dealer goes Bust provided that the Blackjack player has not previously gone Bust).

Additionally, the player's betting palette also illustrates a Dealer Breaks (or Bust) betting option (see the bottom portion of the player's betting palette of FIGS. 1 and 2). This betting option provides the Blackjack player with a 5 to 2 payback (i.e. Five Dollar return for each Two Dollars bet by

the Blackjack player to achieve this result. If a Blackjack player makes this bet, then the Dealer must continue to deal out cards (in accordance with the conventional 21 or Blackjack rules) to the Dealer after all the other Blackjack players have completed play on their hands (even if all of them go Bust).

FIG. 3 depicts a Blackjack table 10 with, for example, six players betting palettes shown thereon. For ease of viewing, the Bonus Hand Payouts are shown extended beyond the curved edge portion of the table 10, however, in actual use, the Bonus Hand Payouts listing is contained within the bounds of the top surface of the table 10.

The following ODDS TABLES for Blackjack Royale identifies the odds associated with each of the above set out betting options (except for the straight one for one bet to beat the Dealer or the Dealer Break or Bust bet which is the above noted 5 to 2 bet). The first vertical column of the ODDS TABLES for Blackjack Royale sets out the various betting options or propositions. The second vertical column sets out the payback if a single one (hit) of the two initial cards is received for the associated betting proposition or option in the adjacent horizontal area. The third vertical column sets out the payback if a pair (two hits) is achieved for the two initial cards. It should be noted that the third vertical column has different payback options that can be selected by the Casino or House running this Blackjack game. The last or fourth vertical column lists the VIG which is the mathematical percentage return to the Casino or House for the different betting options provided in the Blackjack game and method of this invention. For example, the mathematical percentage return to the Casino or House is 1.36% for the payback odds of 5 to 1 or 25 to 1 (respectively, for one hit of a selected 10, Jack, Queen, King or Ace or for two hits of a selected 10, Jack, Queen, King or Ace). However, if the payback odds by the Casino or House is lowered to 22 to 1 for the two hits of a selected 10, Jack, Queen, King or Ace, then the mathematical percentage return to the Casino or House is increased to 2.72%. Correspondingly, for the payback odds lowered to 20 to 1 or 18 to 1 the respective mathematical return for the Casino or house increases to 3.62% and 4.65%. Similarly, the single hit and double hit designations for the 3-6 or 4-5 betting selections are set forth in this table, however, the mathematical percentage return to the Casino or House increases from 1.36% for either the 2 to 1 or 8 to 1 payback return to the Blackjack player for respective single and double hit occurrences to 3.47% if the payback return to the Blackjack player is lowered to 7 to 1 for double hit occurrences and to 5.58% if the payback return to the Blackjack player is lowered to 6 to 1 for double hit occurrences. The last NATURAL (or jackpot) designation in the table identifies a 5.66% mathematical percentage return to the Casino or House if this betting option is selected by Blackjack players, however, this percentage return to the Casino or House is increased to 9.43% if the payback return to the Blackjack player selecting either the Ace Jack (spade) or (club) betting option for the first two (initial) cards received by the Blackjack player is reduced to 1200 to 1.

ODDS TABLES for Blackjack Royale

Proposition	Single Hit	Pair	VIG
A-K-Q-J-T	5-1	25-1	1.36%
	5-1	22-1	2.72%
	5-1	20-1	3.62%
	5-1	18-1	4.55%
	Pair or 2 Hits		
3-6 or 4-5	2-1	8-1	1.36%
	2-1	7-1	3.47%

-continued

ODDS TABLES for Blackjack Royale			
Proposition	Single Hit	Pair	VIG
NATURAL	2-1	6-1	5.58%
	1250-1		5.66%
	1200-1		9.43%

This Blackjack game (presently identified as Blackjack Royale to designate that it is the highest form of Blackjack) is a 21 game that opens up a new window of betting opportunities for the Blackjack player. It is not just an addition to a 21 game, but is an integrated Blackjack game because of the Bonus Hand and Players Betting Palette as shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3. The Bonus Hand and Dealer Breaks or Bust bets provide the Blackjack player with new emphasis and opportunity on the two most important events in a 21 game; the Blackjack player's first two cards, and the Dealer's hand.

Instead of receiving a conventional 21 hand with one betting unit to be exchanged back and forth between the Dealer and the Blackjack player, depending upon who wins, now Blackjack players are provided, in the same round of play, with three layers of betting opportunities (1) to win one of the Bonus Hand bets, (2) the conventional beat the Dealer 21 bet, and (3) the Dealer Break or Bust bet. All three are interrelated to the outcome of the hand

The first two (initial) cards of the Blackjack player's 21 hand are the Bonus Hand. The Players Betting Palette provides players with a range of choices to create their own betting strategy in conjunction with their conventional 21 bet. Players can select the cards they wish to receive in the Bonus Hand from the Palette.

The field of selection that is contained in the Player's Betting Palette consists of the best and worst cards players can receive in their hand. Omitted from the Players Betting Palette are the cards least significant to the outcome of the 21 hand; the 2,7,8 and 9.

Players can create their betting strategy by selecting from a positive (10, Jack, Queen, King, Ace) or negative 3-6 or 4-5 or any combination thereof. Players going for the win on all bets in the round of play will favor the high cards to show in the Bonus Hand, while those who like to hedge their 21 bet by getting a payoff on "stiffs", if their luck is running bad, will take the above noted (negative) small cards to show in the Bonus Hand. Because of the many betting opportunities provided by the Blackjack game of this invention, players can still win even if they Bust or break or if the Dealer has a Blackjack. The possibilities are numerous. Regardless of the outcome of the Blackjack player's 21 and Bonus Hand bets, the Blackjack player also has one last great shot to win the round of play by selecting the Dealer Break or Bust bet. Accordingly, all players will enjoy the flexibility of creating their own betting combinations and strategies. This Blackjack Royale game and method is an open architecture of possibilities, left to the discovery and choices of the Blackjack player,

BlackJack Royale is preferably to be played on a 21 table using the layout as shown in FIG. 3. Six players can be accommodated, if desired, with each having a playing palette on the table directly in front of them (FIGS. 1 and 2). House rules will specify, for example:

1. A single deck is to be used.
2. All Blackjack player cards are dealt face up.
3. One round is played between shuffles.

4. Dealer must stand on a soft 17 as explained above.
5. Resplitting is not allowed.
6. Of course, they must bet on the standard "Blackjack" (21) game which is played out as part of BlackJack Royale.

Propositions or Betting Options

As explained above, there are three mutually independent nodes of betting in BlackJack Royale.

The 21 BET

As a prerequisite for playing BlackJack Royale, the Blackjack player must make a bet in the Palette on the circle denoted "21 BET". This bet is in accordance with the standard 21 game which is part of BlackJack Royale and is played according to conventional house rules for the standard game. Casino or House limits will determine what the bet may be.

Bonus Hand gets

A Blackjack player may also bet on the cards which the Blackjack player expects will be dealt to the Blackjack player in the first two cards called the Bonus Hand. Bets are placed on the Palette in one (or more) of the preferably 7 betting circles denoted as "4-5", "3-6", "10", "J", "Q", "K", "A". If the Bonus Hand (first two initial cards) contains at least one of the chosen cards, the Blackjack player will be paid the appropriate odds (as set forth in the Palette) for the bet. If the card appears twice, the Blackjack player will be paid at appropriately higher odds for the bet. Since the "3-6" and "4-5" bet wins if either card is in the Bonus Hand, the odds are different from those on the single-card propositions.

The Blackjack player may also bet a jackpot (or natural) bet of getting an Ace-Jack in spades and/or an Ace-Jack in clubs. Bet on Dealer Break or Bust

The Blackjack player may also bet that the Dealer will break or bust their hand (exceed 21) during play. This bet is in action regardless of what the Blackjack player has achieved in playing their hand even if they Break or Bust. Mathematical Analysis Of The Bonus Hands Odds For The Single Cards (10-J-Q-K-A)

From a single deck of 52 cards, it is possible to deal out 1,326 unique two-card hands when sequence is ignored. Of these, 192 will consist of a particular card appearing once in the initial two card hand (for example, a 10 with any other non-10 card) and 6 will include that card pair paired with another of the same rank. By paying 5-1 on a single card and 25-1 for a pair of the same selected card, the average payouts in 1,326 plays will be

$$192 \times 6 + (26 \times 6) = 1,308 \text{ producing a vig (see the above ODDS TABLE) of } 18/1,326 = 1.36\%$$

For Receipt At One of Two Cards (3-6 or 4-5)

For the proposition or betting option which provides a betting win on a 3 or 6 (or 4 or 5), there are 352 ways for a particular card to be dealt singularly, 12 ways for pairs and 16 ways for the 3-6 (or 4-5) combinations. By paying 2-1 on a single card and 8-1 on two card combos or pairs, the average payouts in 1,326 plays will be

$$352 \times 3 + (28 \times 9) = 1,308 \text{ producing a vig of } 18/1,326 = 1.36\%$$

Naturals Or Jackpots (Ace-Jack in Spades or Ace-Jack in clubs)

Since there is only one way each winning NATURAL hand can be dealt, the true odds are 1,325-1 for each. By paying odds of 1,250-1 this proposition or betting option produces a vig of 5.66%

Dealer Break

Using a single deck, and with a rule that the Dealer stands on soft 17's as explained above, the Dealer can be expected

to break 26.4% of their hands, assuming that their hand is always played out. By paying 5-2 on this proposition or betting option, the Casino or House has a vig of 0.6% on this proposition or betting option.

Summary

The BlackJack Royale game and method is an attractive and significant improvement to the popular conventional Blackjack (21). The new propositions or betting options are easy to understand and carry low House or Casino Advantages (vigs) which should increase the action for the Blackjack player.

The specific layout and arrangement of the various portions of the player's betting Palette shown in FIG. 1, 2 and 3 are particularly advantageous to playing the Blackjack game and method of this invention on a Blackjack table, however, other arrangements and layouts are possible using the concepts disclosed herein. Accordingly, the patent claims defined below are intended to also cover other layouts and arrangements that will use the patented features and steps of this invention.

While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to the preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that the foregoing and other changes in form and details may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Furthermore, while the above described Blackjack game and method of this invention is described as played with a single deck of 52 playing cards, multiple decks of playing cards can be also used with or without automatic card shuffling equipment. In the situation where multiple decks are used, then the odds for payback to the Blackjack player will be changed to reflect the fact of the use of multiple decks and in proportion to the number of decks that are used while still preserving a reasonable return to the Casino or House for each betting option. Additionally, if desired, as an additional betting option or incentive to this Blackjack game and method, a separate betting category on the Palette can be used for the Blackjack player to bet for achieving any Ace Jack suited pair of initial cards for the first two initial cards received by the Blackjack player. Obviously, the payback to the Blackjack player betting this option will be lower than the 1250 to 1 payback for betting either the Ace Jack of spades or the Ace Jack of clubs, but this betting option will be higher than the other paybacks noted in the Palette of FIGS. 1, 2, 3.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer comprising the step of:

providing a Blackjack player with a jackpot betting option to make a bet and have a possibility of winning more than one thousand times the bet made by the Blackjack player; and

providing the Blackjack player with additional separate betting options to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5, one of a 3 and 6 and a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on the Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the jackpot betting option creates the possibility of winning about 1250 times the bet made by the Blackjack player.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player for this specific option.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 3 and 6.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace creates a possibility of winning about 5 times the bet made by the Blackjack player for this specific option.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein a possibility of winning about 25 times the bet made by the Blackjack player is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to the selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the jackpot betting option is created by the Blackjack player separately betting on receiving both initial cards to be one of an Ace and Jack of Spades and an Ace and Jack of clubs.

12. A method of playing Blackjack against the Dealer comprising the steps of:

providing a Blackjack player with separate betting options to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5, one of a 3 and 6 and a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on the Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

14. The method of claim 13 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

15. The method of claim 12 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player for this specific option.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5.

17. The method of claim 12 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of about winning 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 3 and 6.

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19. The method of claim 12 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace creates a possibility of winning about 5 times the bet made by the Blackjack player for this specific option. 5

20. The method of claim 19 wherein a possibility of winning about 25 times the bet made by the Blackjack player is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to the selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace. 10

21. A method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer comprising the step of:

providing a Blackjack player with separate betting options to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 and one of a 3 and 6. 15

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on the Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs. 20

23. The method of claim 22 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

24. The method of claim 21 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player for this specific option. 25

25. The method of claim 24 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5. 30

26. The method of claim 21 wherein one of the betting options to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player. 35

27. The method of claim 26 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 3 and 6. 40

28. A method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer comprising the step of:

providing a Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5. 45

29. The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on the Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs. 50

30. The method of claim 29 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer. 55

31. The method of claim 28 wherein the betting option to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player for this specific option. 60

32. The method of claim 31 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5. 65

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33. A method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer comprising the step of:

providing a Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6.

34. The method of claim 33 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on the Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

35. The method of claim 34 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

36. The method of claim 33 wherein the betting option to receive at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein a possibility of winning about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 3 and 6.

38. A Blackjack card game comprising in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of said Blackjack card table;

said betting layout comprising a betting region for a Blackjack player to make a jackpot bet having a possibility of winning more than one thousand times the bet made by the Blackjack player, said betting layout having additional separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5, one of a 3 and 6, and a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

39. The Blackjack card game of claim 38 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a bet on a Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

40. The Blackjack card game of claim 39 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

41. The Blackjack card game of claim 38 wherein said jackpot bet having a possibility of winning about 1250 times the jackpot bet made by the Blackjack player.

42. The Blackjack card game of claim 38 wherein the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

43. The Blackjack card game of claim 42 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5.

44. The Blackjack card game of claim 38 wherein the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

45. The Blackjack card game of claim 44 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to receive at least one of a 3 and 6 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 3 and 6.

46. The Blackjack card game of claim 38 wherein each of the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to a selected one for each of said separate betting regions of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace creates a possibility of winning about 5 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on each of the separate betting regions.

47. The Blackjack card game of claim 46 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 25 times the bet made by the Blackjack player if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player betting on said each of the separate betting regions is equal to the selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

48. The Blackjack card game of claim 38 wherein the betting means for a Blackjack player to make a jackpot bet comprises two separate jackpot betting regions with one of the two separate jackpot betting regions is for the Blackjack player to bet on receiving an Ace and Jack of Spades for both initial cards received by the Blackjack player and the other of the two separate jackpot betting regions is for the Blackjack player to bet on receiving an Ace and Jack of Clubs for both initial cards received by the Blackjack player.

49. A Blackjack card game comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of said Blackjack card table;

said betting layout comprising separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5, one of a 3 and 6 and a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

50. The Blackjack card game of claim 49 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a bet on a Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

51. The Blackjack card game of claim 50 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

52. The Blackjack card game of claim 49 wherein the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

53. The Blackjack card game or claim 52 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5.

54. The Blackjack card game of claim 49 wherein the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

55. The Blackjack card game of claim 54 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to

receive at least one of a 3 and 6 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack are equal to one of a 3 and 6.

56. The Blackjack card game of claim 49 wherein each of the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to a selected one for each of said separate betting regions of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace creates a possibility of winning about 5 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on each of the separate betting regions.

57. The Blackjack card game of claim 56 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 25 times the bet made by the Blackjack player if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player betting on said each of the separate betting regions is equal to the selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

58. A Blackjack card game comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of said Blackjack card table;

said betting layout comprising a separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 and another separate region for the Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6.

59. The Blackjack card game of claim 58 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a bet on a Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

60. The Blackjack card game of claim 59 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

61. The Blackjack card game of claim 58 wherein the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

62. The Blackjack card game of claim 61 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5.

63. The Blackjack card game of claim 58 wherein the separate betting region for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

64. The Blackjack card game of claim 63 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to receive at least one at a 3 and 6 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 3 and 6.

65. A Blackjack card game comprising, in combination: a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of said Blackjack card table;

said betting layout comprising a separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5.

66. The Blackjack card game of claim 65 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Black-

jack player to make a bet on a Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

67. The Blackjack card game of claim 66 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Black-
jack player to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

68. The Blackjack card game of claim 65 wherein the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 4 and 5 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

69. The Blackjack card game of claim 68 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about a times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to receive at least one of a 4 and 5 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 4 and 5.

70. A Blackjack card game comprising, in combination:

a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of said Blackjack card table;

said betting layout comprising a separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6.

71. The Blackjack card game of claim 70 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Black-
jack player to make a bet on a Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

72. The Blackjack card game of claim 71 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Black-
jack player to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

73. The Blackjack card game of claim 70 wherein the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 3 and 6 creates a possibility of winning about 2 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on this separate betting region.

74. The Blackjack card game of claim 73 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 8 times the bet made by the Blackjack player on the separate betting region to receive at least one of a 3 and 6 if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to one of a 3 and 6.

75. A Blackjack card game comprising, in combination:

a Blackjack card table having a betting layout located on a surface portion of said Blackjack card table;

said betting layout comprising separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the

Blackjack player equal to a selected one for each of said separate betting means of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

76. The Blackjack card game of claim 75 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Black-
jack player to make a bet on a Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

77. The Blackjack card game of claim 76 wherein said betting layout having a separate betting region for a Black-
jack player to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

78. The Blackjack card game of claim 75 wherein each of the separate betting means for a Blackjack player to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to a selected one for each of said separate betting regions of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace creates a possibility of winning about 5 times the bet made by the Blackjack player betting on each of the separate betting regions.

79. The Blackjack card game of claim 78 wherein the Blackjack player can receive about 25 times the bet made by the Blackjack player if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player betting on said each of the separate betting regions is equal to the selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

80. A method of playing Blackjack against a Dealer comprising the step of:

providing a Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to a selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

81. The method of claim 80 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a bet on the Dealer going Bust to receive more than a 2 to 1 return to the Blackjack player if this occurs.

82. The method of claim 81 further comprising the step of: providing the Blackjack player with a betting option to make a straight 1 for 1 bet to beat the Dealer.

83. The method of claim 80 wherein the betting option to make a bet on receiving at least one card from an initial two cards received by the Blackjack player equal to one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace creates a possibility of winning about 5 times the bet made by the Blackjack player.

84. The method of claim 83 wherein a possibility of winning about 25 times the bet made by the Blackjack player is achieved if both initial cards received by the Blackjack player are equal to the selected one of a 10, a Jack, a Queen, a King and an Ace.

* * * * *

C. U.S. Patent No. 6,598,879 to Spur, filed on September 17, 2001

See, e.g., column 3, lines 39-44



US006598879B2

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Spur et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 6,598,879 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Jul. 29, 2003**

(54) **METHOD OF PLAYING BLACKJACK WITH HIT INSURANCE**

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(73) Assignee: **Multishift, Inc.**, Stateline, NV (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **A63F 1/00**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **273/292**

(58) **Field of Search** 273/292, 274, 273/309; 463/12, 13

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Primary Examiner—Benjamin H. Layno

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Skinner, Watson & Rounds

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A method of playing Blackjack is disclosed wherein the player can wager that his hand will be broken by placing a side bet which is referred to as “Hit Insurance”. Two aspects of the invention are disclosed. The first aspect allows the player to place the side bet after he has seen his initial hand. If the player has 12 through 16 and the dealer has seven through ace as the upcard, the player is given the option of placing the side bet that he will be broken when he receives the hit card. In a first variation, the player places a side bet against a single hit and can renew the bet if he loses on the hit. In a second variation, the player places a side bet against multiple hits. In a second aspect of the invention, the player places a side bet before he is dealt any cards. In a first variation, the side bet loses if the dealer has 2 through 6 as the face card. In a second variation, the side bet pushes if the dealer has 2 through 6 as the up card. The second aspect of the invention may or may not have Blackjack insurance included in the side bet.

75 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets

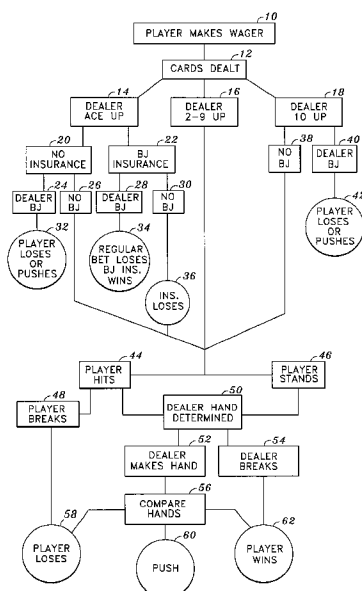


FIG. 1

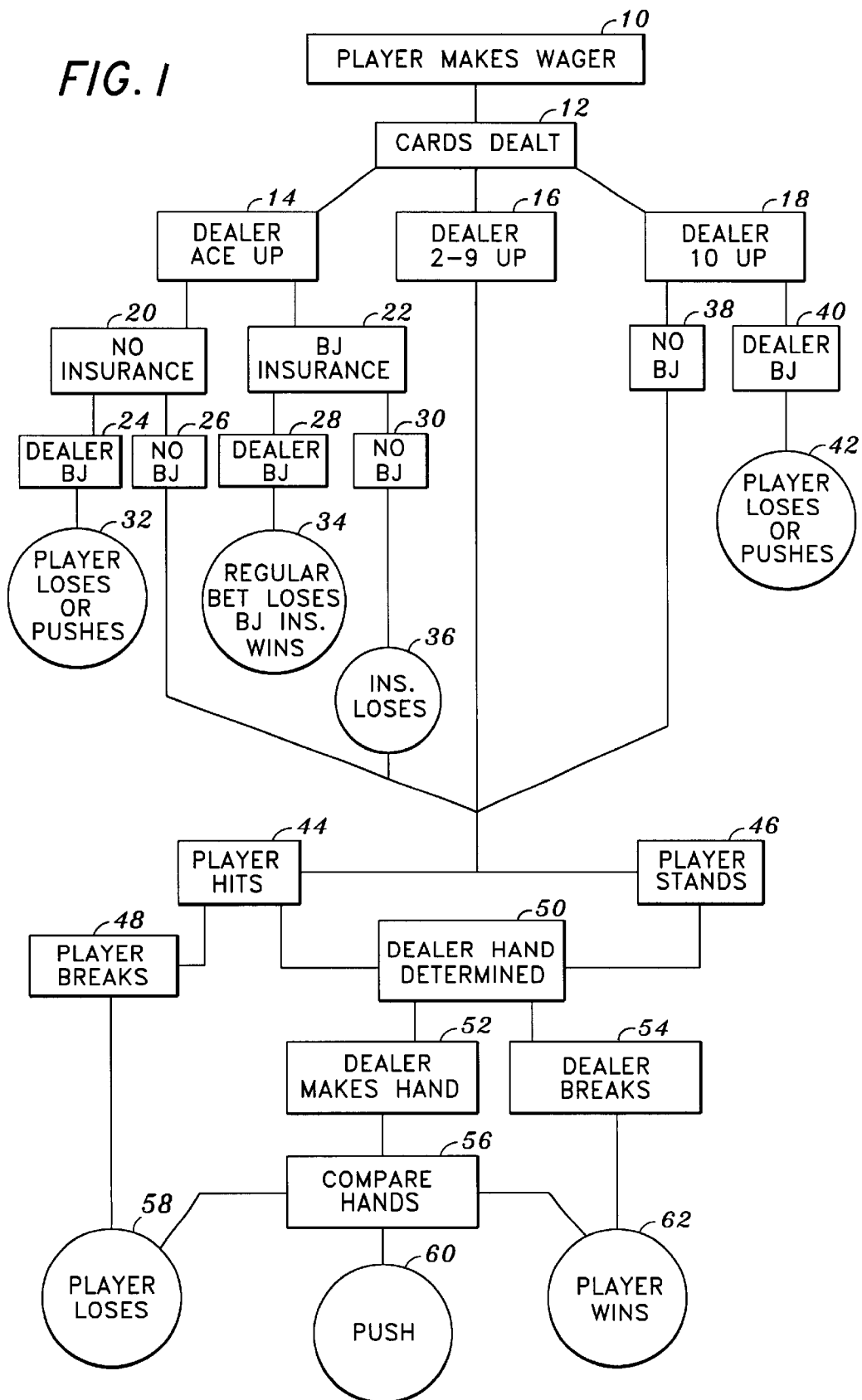


FIG. 2

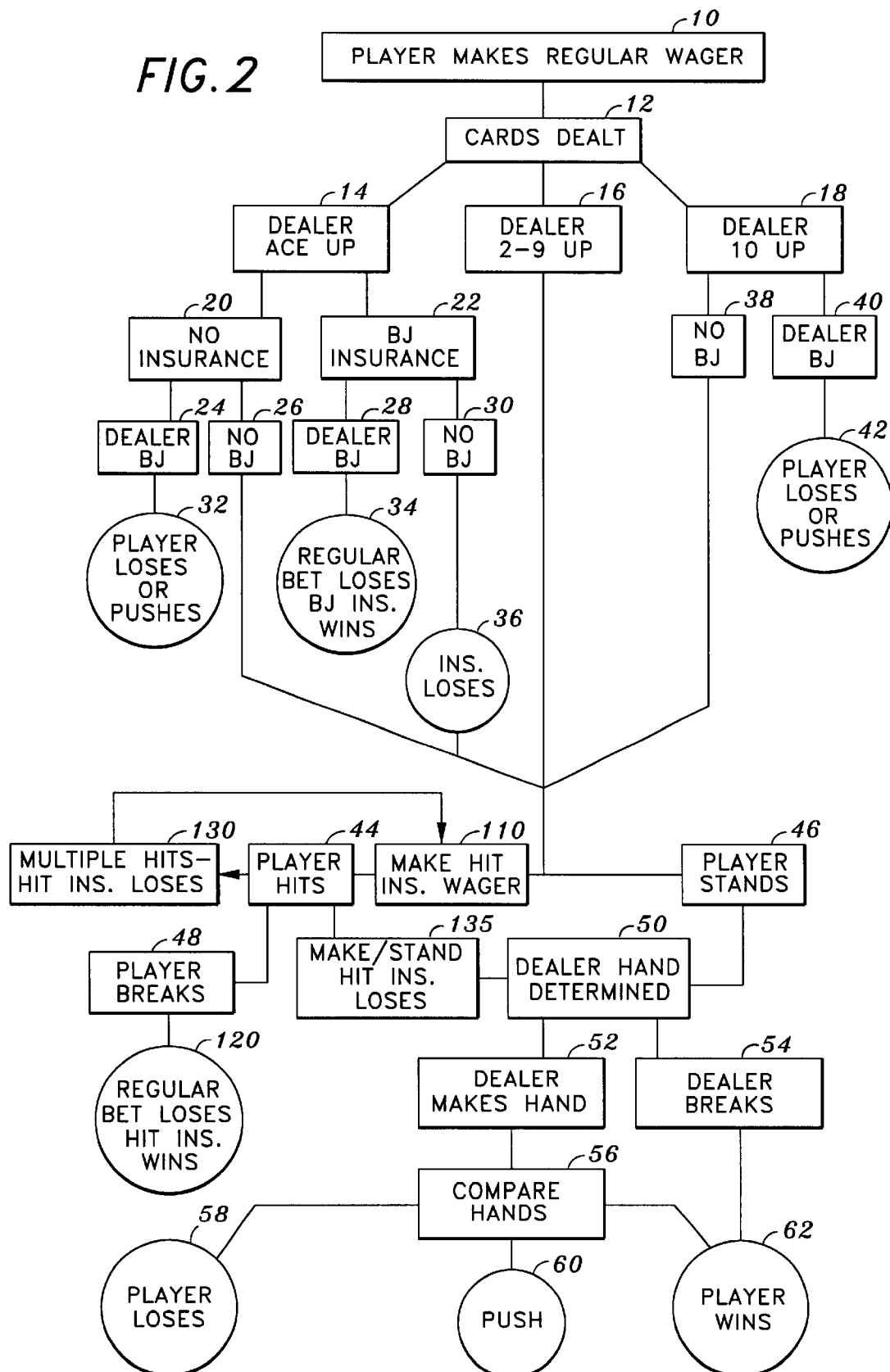


FIG. 3

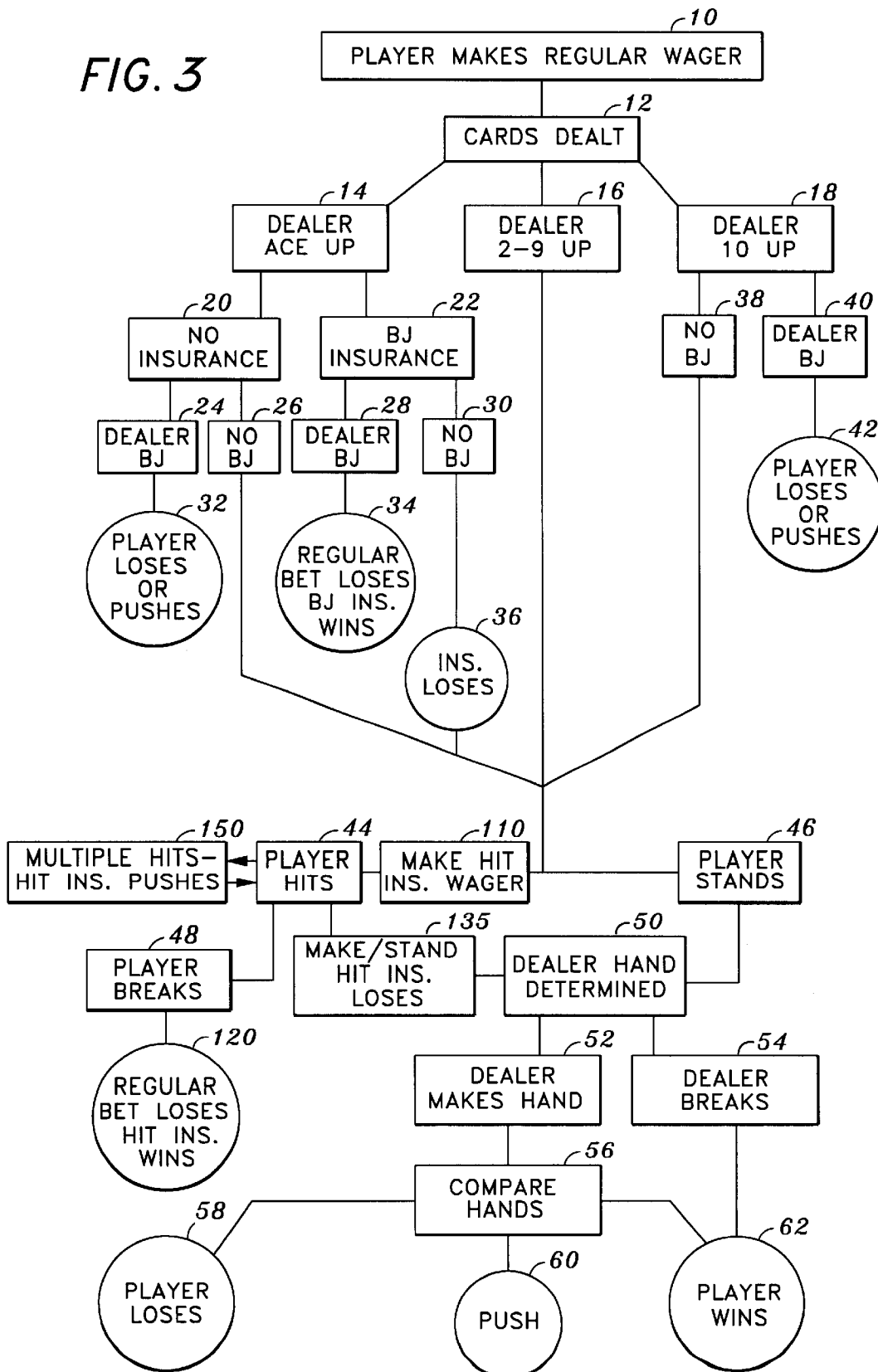


FIG. 4

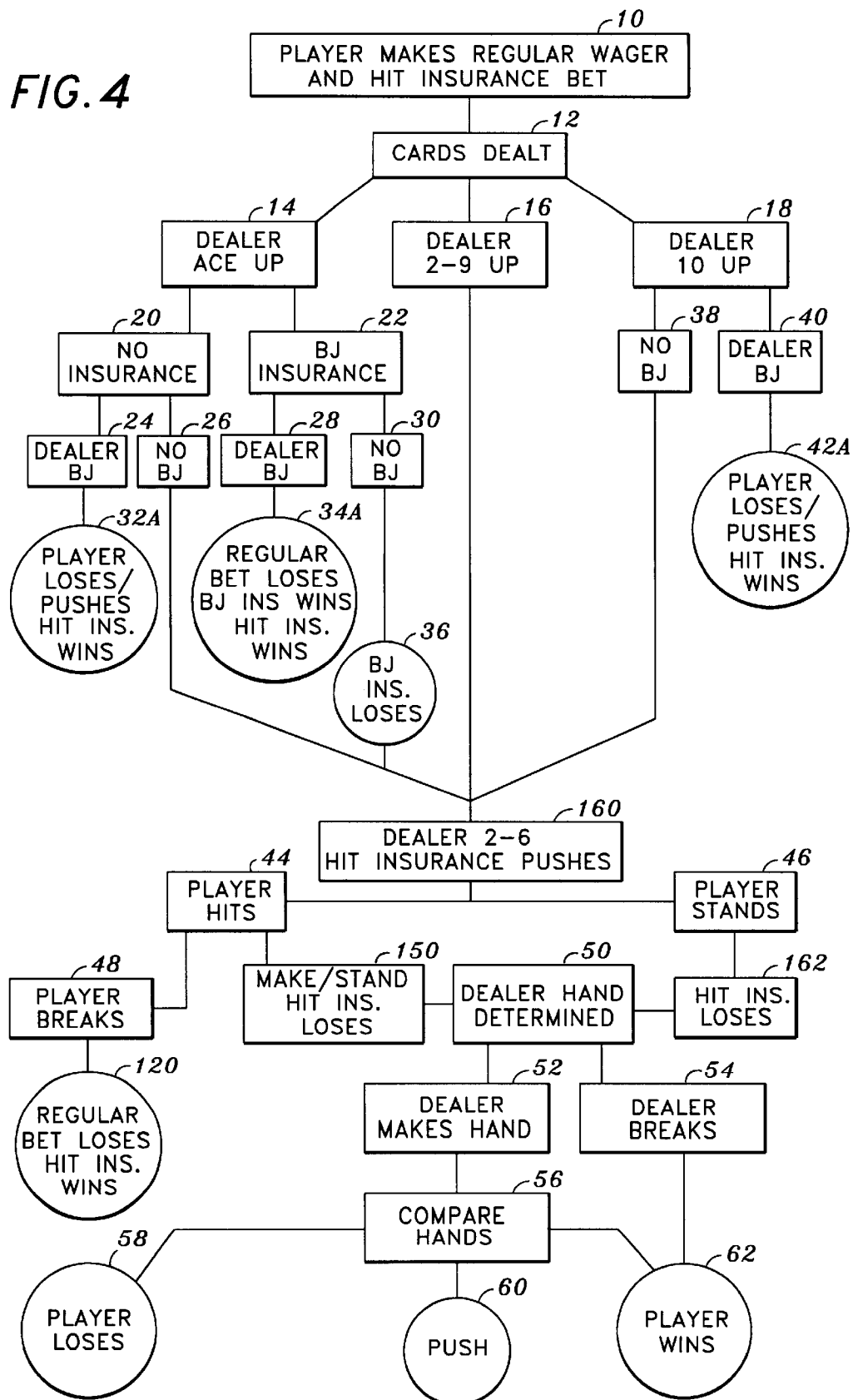


FIG. 5

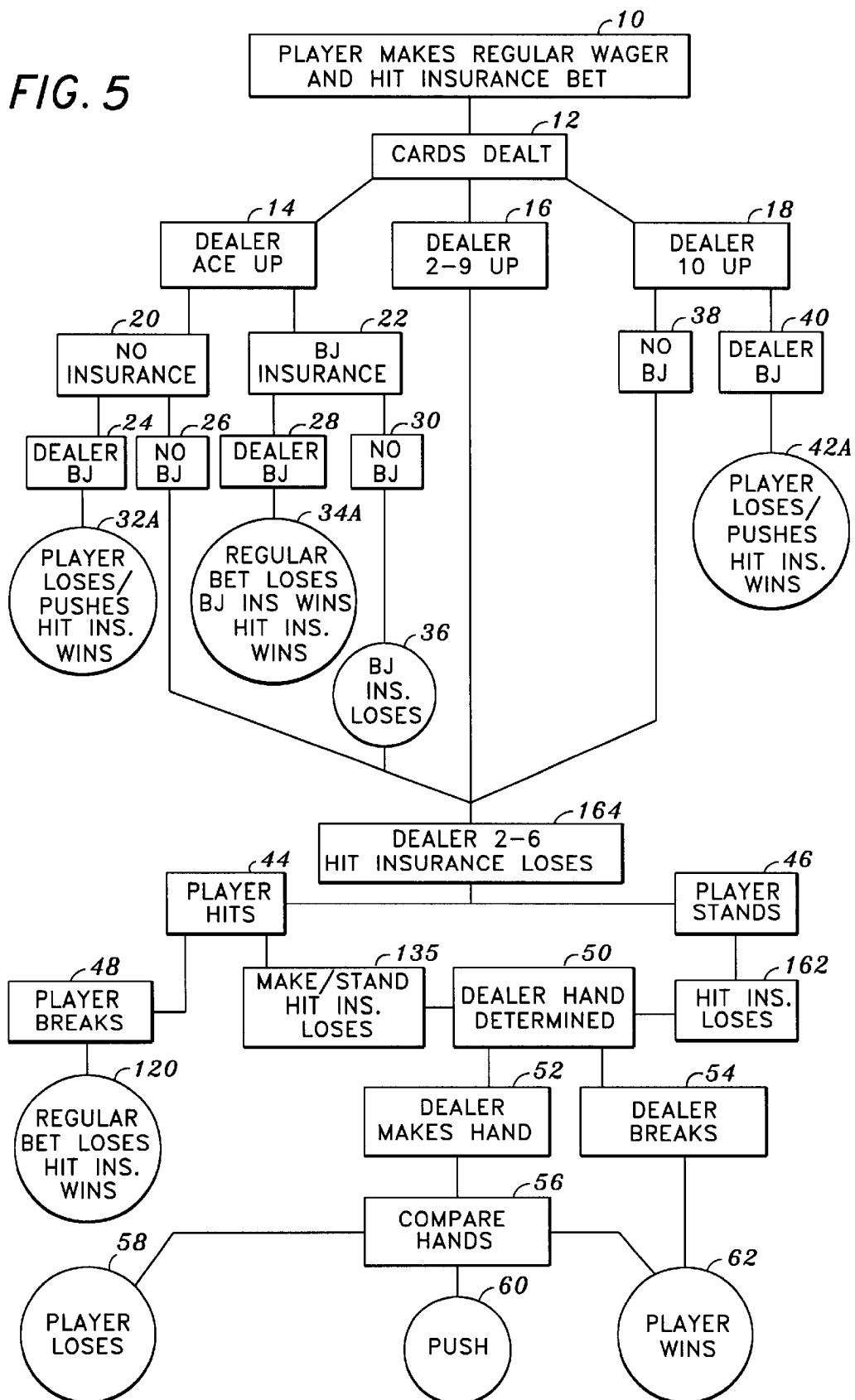


FIG. 6

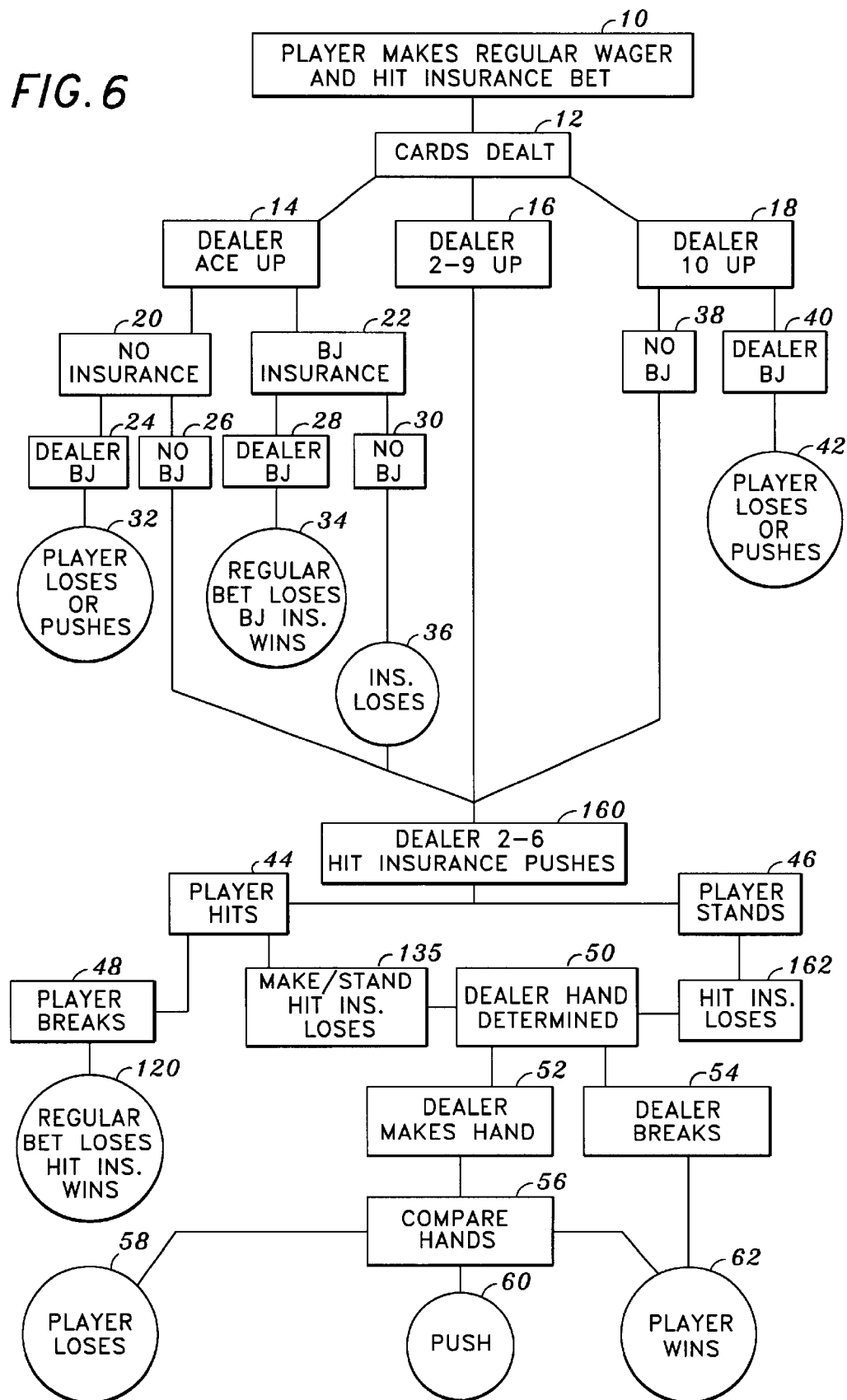
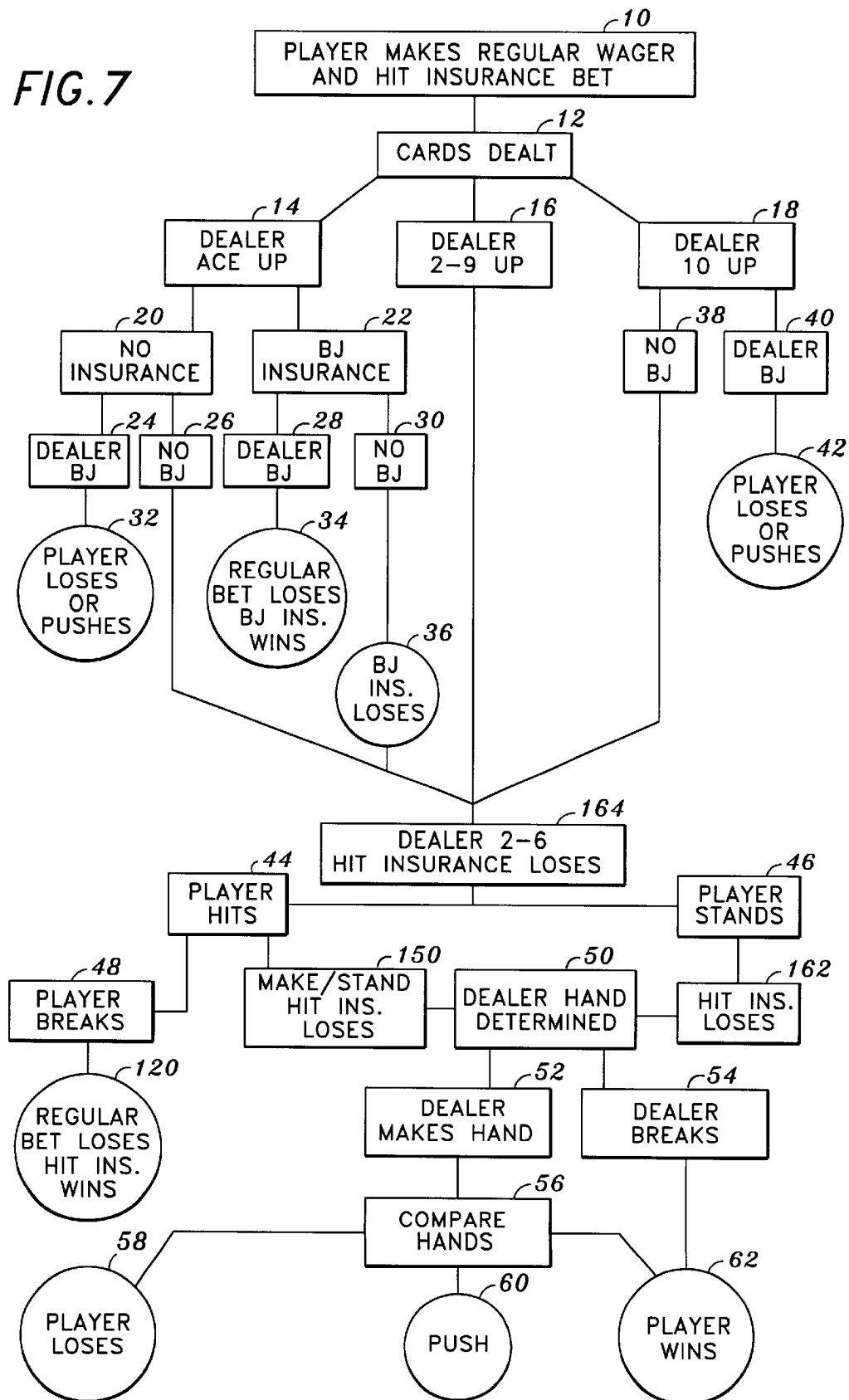


FIG. 7



METHOD OF PLAYING BLACKJACK WITH HIT INSURANCE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a method of playing a Blackjack game. More specifically it relates to a modification of the method of playing a Blackjack game. The modification to the game involves the placing of a side bet to the traditional Blackjack game. The side bet wagers that the player's hand will total over 21 after the player has been hit.

The conventional casino Blackjack table is a half-circle with one curved side for the players to stand or sit and a straight side where the dealer stands or sits. Most conventional Blackjack tables have five, six or seven player positions. Each player position has a single "21" wager box.

As used in this patent application the terms "conventional Blackjack" and "the conventional manner of play of Blackjack" means the game of Blackjack as described on pages 276-282 of Scarne's Encyclopedia of Games by John Scarne, Harper & Row publishers and as described and incorporated herein by reference.

In conventional Blackjack, at least one standard deck of 52 playing cards is used and each card counts its face value. The only exceptions are Aces which have a value of one or eleven as is most beneficial to the count of the player's hand and face cards which have a value of ten. The player's object of the game is to get a higher count (total value of cards in hand) than the dealer's hand, but not over 21.

In the conventional or traditional game of Blackjack, a "21" wager is made by each player before the start of the deal. When the dealer's final hand is closer to 21, but not over, or the player busts, the player loses that wager. When the player wins that wager, the dealer pays the player an amount equal to the player's "21" wager. However, if the player gets a "natural" blackjack hand, the dealer pays the player one and one-half times the amount of the player's wager. Those skilled in the art know that individual casinos pay larger odds and/or various bonuses in addition to the conventional payoffs.

The sequence of play is shown by the flowchart in FIG. 1. As indicated by step 10, the player makes the Blackjack wager. The dealer then deals the cards in step 12. In the dealing procedure, each player initially receives two cards. The dealer also receives two cards. One of the dealer's cards is dealt face-down and the other face-up. In some casinos, the dealer receives his two cards at the same time that each player is dealt his two cards. In other casinos, the dealer initially only receives one card which becomes the dealer's face-up card. The dealer receives his second card after each player has taken additional cards.

There are three situations to be considered after the hands are dealt. The first situation is when the dealer's face card is an ace. This situation is shown in step 14. The second situation is when the dealer's face card has a value of 2 through 9. This situation is shown in step 16. Finally, the third situation is when the dealer's face card is a 10 or a picture card whose value is also 10. This situation is shown in step 18. Depending on the above three situations, various outcomes are possible as described below.

Referring now to step 14, if the dealer has an Ace as an upcard, the player is given the option of placing a side bet known as Blackjack insurance that the dealer's second card will result in the dealer having a Blackjack. A description of

the Blackjack insurance is given below. The actions pertaining to the Blackjack insurance are shown in steps 20 and 22. Step 20 indicates that the player has not placed the Blackjack insurance bet. Step 22 indicates that the player has placed the Blackjack insurance bet. After the player has or has not placed the Blackjack insurance bet in boxes 20 and 22, the dealer shows his hand as indicated in steps 24, 26, 28, and 30. In step 24, the dealer is represented to have a Blackjack after the player has not taken Blackjack insurance. In this case, the player loses the regular bet as indicated in step 32 and the game is over.

Alternatively, the player pushes the bet if he too has a Blackjack. In step 28, the dealer is represented to have a Blackjack after the player has taken Blackjack insurance. In this case, the player loses the regular bet and wins on the Blackjack insurance as indicated in result circle 34 and the game is over. Alternately, in step 26, the dealer is represented to not have a Blackjack after the player has not taken Blackjack insurance. In this case, neither the dealer nor the player wins or loses and the game proceeds to the next stage where the player either stands on his hand as indicated in step 46 or requests hit cards as indicated in step 44. In step 30, the dealer is represented to not have a Blackjack after the player has taken Blackjack insurance. In this case, the player keeps the regular bet and loses on the Blackjack insurance as indicated in step 36 and the game proceeds to the next stage where the player either stands on his hand as indicated in step 46 or requests hit cards as indicated in step 44.

Returning now to the second situation shown in step 16 where the dealer has a 2-9 as an upcard, the game proceeds to the next stage where the player either stands on his hand as indicated in step 46 or requests hit cards as indicated in step 44.

Returning now to the third situation shown in step 18 where the dealer has a 10 as an upcard, the dealer then checks his hole card. If the dealer does not have a Blackjack as shown in step 38, the game proceeds to the next stage where the player either stands on his hand as indicated in step 46 or requests hit cards as indicated in step 44. If the dealer has a Blackjack as shown in step 40, the player loses the regular bet as indicated by step 42. Alternately, the player pushes the bet if he too has a Blackjack.

At the next stage of the game, as noted above, the player starts by either standing on his hand as indicated in step 46 or by requesting one or more cards (hit/hits) as indicated by step 44. The dealer can also take additional cards to make his hand. This aspect is not shown in the flowchart, but is well known as being a part of the game. After the dealer has taken his additional cards, the dealer shows his hand as indicated by step 50. If the dealer breaks as shown in step 54, the player wins the regular bet as shown in step 62. If the dealer does not break but instead makes a hand as shown in step 52, the player's and the dealer's hands are compared as shown in step 56. If the player's hand is closer to 21 than the dealer's hand, the player wins as shown in step 62. If both the dealer and the player have equal hand, the result is a push as indicated by step 60. If the dealer's hand is closer to 21 than the player's hand, the player loses as shown in step 58.

Returning now to the situation where the player requests additional cards as shown in step 44, two outcomes are possible. If the additional cards result in the player getting a hand with a total greater than 21, the player breaks as shown in step 48. In this case, the player loses as shown in step 58. After the player stops requesting additional cards in step 44, the dealer may take his additional cards to make his hand. After the dealer has taken his additional cards, the

dealer shows his hand as indicated by step 50. If the dealer breaks as shown in box 54, the player wins the regular bet as shown in step 62. If the dealer does not break but instead makes a hand as shown in step 52, the player's and the dealer's hands are compared as shown in step 56. If the player's hand is closer to 21 than the dealer's hand, the player wins as shown in step 62. If both the dealer and the player have equal hand, the result is a push as indicated by step 60. If the dealer's hand is closer to 21 than the player's hand, the player loses as shown in step 58.

There are other procedures to the above basic procedure. One well-known procedure is "Doubling Down." When the player's first two cards have a combined value of 10 or 11, or any first two cards in some casinos, the player may "Double Down" on his hand. The player turns both of his cards face-up in front of him and makes a second wager equal to the amount of his "21" wager. The dealer deals the player one additional card and the resulting three-card hand establishes that player's hand.

Another well-known procedure is splitting pairs. When the player's first two cards are a pair or of equal count, the player may "split" those cards into two separate hands. His original wager is applied to one of the hands and he makes an additional wager for the other hand, equal to his original "21" wager. The player receives a new second card for each of the hands and each hand is played separately.

As described above, the player can take Blackjack insurance. The mechanics of Blackjack insurance are described as follows. When the dealer's face-up card is an Ace, before any cards are drawn, players may make an "Insurance" bet. Each player can wager one-half of the amount of his "21" wager as insurance against the dealer having a blackjack, i.e. a two-card 21 count (an Ace and a 10 count card). If the dealer has a two-card 21 count, the player wins two-to-one on his "Insurance" bet. Also, when the dealer has a two-card 21 count, that round of the game is over and all players lose except those who also have a two-card 21 count. These players "push" with the dealer. If the dealer does not have a two-card 21 count, the player loses on his insurance bet and the round of the game continues.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide a modified method of playing Blackjack that can make the game of Blackjack more interesting and exciting to the player. There is a need for a player to be able to have a choice of placing a side-bet that his hand will go over 21 after he has received a hit card. Such a bet would provide some protection to a player that he would recoup some of his loss on the regular bet if his hand goes over 21. Further, it would provide some encouragement for the player to keep playing even when he is having a bad streak of losing hands. Thus the player would not be induced to stop playing or go elsewhere to change his "luck". Therefore, this modified method of playing Blackjack could substantially increase the casino's profit from the game of Blackjack.

BlackJack Has Its Own Language

As used in this patent application, the following words have the following meanings ascribed to them:

- "Bet"—money or chips wagered on the outcome of a hand or hands.
- "Blackjack"—the Americanized name of Vingt-et-un (French) and/also means 10 count card plus an Ace, totaling 21 in the player's or the dealer's initial two-card hand.
- "Break" or "Bust"—having cards totaling over 21.
- "Chip Tray"—a flat open container on the table where the dealer's chips are held.
- "Conventional Blackjack Game"—Blackjack as described In Scarne's Encyclopedia of Games pp. 276-282 and/or as described in this patent application.

"Conventional Blackjack Table"—table with a half-circle side for the players and a straight side for the dealer. The table is covered with a layout with indicia printed thereon and having a single "21" wager box imprinted in each player's station.

"Conventional '21' Wager Box"—a single rectangle or other identifiable area on a Blackjack table layout identified on the accompanying drawings as item 12, where a player places his conventional "21" wager.

"Conventional 21 Wager"—an initial 21 wager made in the conventional game of Blackjack. The payoff is usually one-to-one except when the player has a two card blackjack the payoff is 3-to-2.

"Casino"—a gaming establishment.

"Each Deal"—the dealing of one round of hands as described in Scarne's Encyclopedia of Games and/or as described herein.

"Dealer"—the person that deals the cards and conducts the game.

"Double Down"—The act of doubling the size of the bet and drawing one more card.

"Draw" or "Hit"—to take additional cards to add to the cards in the hand.

"Hole Card"—the dealer's face down or unexposed second card.

"Initial Hand"—the first hand dealt to the dealer and/or player on each round of hands.

"Initial 21 Wager(s)"—"21" wagers made before the start of the deal. "Layout"—a design printed onto the playing surface of the Blackjack table and/or fabric table cover that shows the 21 wager boxes, Insurance wager box, and/or other information, i.e. "Blackjack Insurance Pays 2-TO-1", "Dealer draws to a soft 17".

"Natural"—initial two cards dealt including an Ace and a 10-value card. Considered an automatic winning hand unless compared to another Natural. Generally paid a bonus when received by the player of 1.5 to 1.

"Posted odds"—the payoff on a wager as shown on a table sign or as imprinted on the table layout.

"Push"—means tie, stand-off, no action. Push or tie hands are not counted as a hand being won or lost.

"Surrender"—Before taking a "hit", "surrender" is sometimes allowed. Some casinos permit the player to cancel his hand before he draws any cards by surrendering one-half of his wager.

"Table Sign"—a sign on the table that shows table wager limits and other information.

"Split"—to make two hands out of the original two-card pair or equal value cards.

"Station"—a designated area on a layout that has the player's wager boxes and where the dealer deals cards to the player and where winning wagers are paid.

"Stiff"—any hand between 12 and 16 in which the player or dealer has a chance of breaking.

"Wager"—money or chips wagered on the outcome of the hand to be or being played.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In a first aspect of the present invention, a method of playing Blackjack is disclosed wherein the player is given the option of placing a side bet that he will be broken when he receives hit cards. The method comprises the first step of assigning the player to a station at a Blackjack table, which is modified with the inclusion of indicia marked "Hit Insurance" at the player's station. The player is then required to make a regular Blackjack bet in order to receive a hand of cards and participate in the game. The dealer then deals the

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player a hand of cards. The dealer then deals himself/herself a hand of cards in which one card is placed with its face exposed (commonly referred to as the upcard or face card). If the player has a hand total between a first value of 12 and a second value of 16 and if the dealer's upcard shows a third value of seven through a fourth value of ace, the player is given the option of placing the side bet that he will be broken when he receives the hit card. Two variations for placing the side bet are provided in the first aspect of the invention.

In the first variation of the first aspect of the invention, the player makes the side bet before he requests a hit card. If the player makes 17 through 21 or stands on his hand, the side bet loses. If the hit card breaks the hand, the side bet wins and the regular bet loses. If the hit card results in a stiff hand (i.e., hard 12 through 16), the side bet loses and the regular bet stands. The player can then place another side bet wagering that he will be broken on the next hit. The player can keep on placing the side bet until he receives a pat hand (17 through 21), or is broken, or stands on the hand. The traditional rules of Blackjack are then used to determine if the player or the dealer has won the hand or if the game results in a push. A further variation may include the side bet pushing or receiving a payoff when the player receives a natural Blackjack.

In the second variation of the first aspect of the invention, the player also makes the side bet before he requests a hit card. If the first hit does not break the hand or result in a pat hand, the side bet is not lost. Rather, the player can request additional hit cards against the same side bet. The side bet is allowed to remain in play until the player is broken or makes 17 through 21 or stands on his hand. If the player stands on the hand, the traditional rules of Blackjack are used to determine if the player or the dealer has won the hand or if the game results in a push. As above, a further variation may include the side bet pushing or receiving a payoff when the player receives a natural Blackjack.

In another aspect of the present invention, a method of playing Blackjack is disclosed wherein the player is given the option of placing a side bet that he will be broken before he is dealt any cards. If the dealer's upcard is 2 through 6, the side bet pushes. (Otherwise, the player loses the side bet.) The player can then request hit cards until he makes 17 through 21, or stands on the hand, or is broken. If the hand is broken, the player wins on the side bet and loses on the regular bet. If the player stands on the hand, the traditional rules of Blackjack are used to determine if the player or the dealer has won the hand or if the game results in a push.

In a variation of the second aspect of the present invention, a method of playing Blackjack is disclosed wherein the player is given the option of placing a side bet that he will be broken before he is dealt any cards. However, in this variation, the side bet loses if the dealer's upcard is 2 through 6. (Otherwise the player keeps the side bet.) The player can then request hit cards until he makes 17 through 21 or stands on the hand or is broken. If the hand is broken, the player wins on the side bet and loses on the regular bet. If the player stands on the hand, the traditional rules of Blackjack are used to determine if the player or the dealer has won the hand or if the game results in a push.

In yet another variation of the second aspect of the present invention, Blackjack insurance is included in the side bet wager. This feature of the game provides an incentive for the player to make the side bet before he is dealt the hand.

In a further variation of the second aspect of the present invention, the rules of the game allows for the payment of a reduced payoff on the regular bet and larger payoff on the side bet.

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In an additional variation of the second aspect of the present invention, the rules of the game allow for a random payoff to be made on the side bet. In this variation, the player who wins on the side bet is allowed to operate a mechanism that generates a random win amount. Thus the player has the potential of winning a larger amount than in the variations of the game described above.

In still a further variation of the second aspect of the present invention, the rules of the game allows for the early bet to be moved to the regular bet when the dealer has a 2 through 6 as an upcard. This variation of the game allows the player to increase his wager when he feels that the odds favor his hand.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a flow chart representation of a Blackjack game of the prior art, which is played according to traditional rules.

FIG. 2 is a flow chart representation of a Blackjack game according to the present invention in which a side bet is placed as hit insurance after the player sees his initial hand. The side bet is placed before every hit that the player requests after his initial hand. The side bet wagers that the hand will exceed 21 after the hit.

FIG. 3 is a flow chart representation of a Blackjack game according to the present invention, in which a side bet is placed as hit insurance after the player sees his initial hand. The side bet is only placed one time in the hand. The side bet wagers that the hand will exceed 21 after the hit. The side bet remains in place for multiple hits if the hit card produces another stiff hand.

FIG. 4 is a flow chart representation of a Blackjack game according to the present invention, in which a side bet is placed as hit insurance before the player is dealt his initial hand. The side bet also provides automatic Blackjack insurance. The side bet pushes if the dealer has a 2-6 upcard.

FIG. 5 is a flow chart representation of a Blackjack game according to the present invention, in which a side bet is placed as hit insurance before the player is dealt his initial hand. The side bet also provides automatic Blackjack insurance. The side bet loses if the dealer has a 2-6 upcard.

FIG. 6 is a flow chart representation of a Blackjack game according to the present invention, in which a side bet is placed as hit insurance before the player is dealt his initial hand. The side bet does not provide automatic Blackjack insurance, which is placed as a separate bet. The side bet pushes if the dealer has a 2-6 upcard.

FIG. 7 is a flow chart representation of a Blackjack game according to the present invention, in which a side bet is placed as hit insurance before the player is dealt his initial hand. The side bet does not provide automatic Blackjack insurance, which is placed as a separate bet. The side bet loses if the dealer has a 2-6 upcard.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is a modification of a traditional Blackjack game that offers the player the opportunity to place a side bet in addition to his main bet. This side bet is also referred to as "Hit Insurance" in this specification. Hit Insurance offers players the opportunity to win on the side bet if the player's hand total exceeds 21. The present invention can be implemented, for example, as a video game or a live table game.

A well-known strategy of playing Blackjack recommends that player should usually hit his hand, when the player has

a “stiff” hand (i.e., hard 12 through 16) and the dealer has a seven through ace showing. However, this strategy creates the possibility that the player will “break” or “bust” (i.e. get a total greater than 21) and lose the hand. In the present invention, the player can make an additional bet (or side bet) that he will break his hand. If a hit card breaks the player’s hand, the regular bet loses as normal, and the side bet wins. According to the present invention, the side bet can be made two basic ways. In the first way, the side bet is made before the cards are dealt to the player. This side bet is known as an “Early Bet”. In the second way, the side bet is made after the player has seen his hand. This side bet is known as a “Late Bet”. Additional strategies and betting opportunities can also be provided within the framework of the two basic ways of placing the side bet. These strategies and betting opportunities are described below.

Using the format and rules of traditional six or eight deck face up Blackjack, the side bet (or Hit Insurance) is played as an additional bet made either during the hitting sequence of the game or before any cards are dealt. However, a single deck may be used if only an Early Bet is allowed to be placed. After the initial two cards are dealt to all players and the dealer, and before the hitting sequence begins, the dealer checks his hole card, if the upcard is a Ten-valued card, for Blackjack. All other Blackjack rules, such as splitting, doubling down, Blackjack insurance, etc., remain the same as in the traditional Blackjack game.

The player can now bet that he will break his hand. If a hit card causes the player’s hand to total over 21, the regular bet loses as normal, and the side bet wins. As noted above, the side bet can be made two ways:

The first way of making the side bet is the “Late Bet”. The Late Bet is available after the players have seen their hands. If a player has (or hits into) a first value of 12 for example through a second value of 16 for example and the dealer has a third value of seven for example through a fourth value of ace for example as an upcard, the player may make an additional wager that he will break his hand. Once the Late Bet is made, it remains until the hand either wins by breaking, or loses by either standing or making a “pat” hand (17 through 21). Other variations of the Late Bet provide for a late bet play for each individual hit card. In such variations, higher payoffs can be offered for each individual card to make the game more exciting for the player and more lucrative for the casino. If the player breaks, the winning bet is paid odds based on the total points in the hand when the hit card is delivered. The wager may be any amount up to the amount of the original bet.

The second way in which the side bet may be made is the “Early Bet”. In the early bet, the player makes the wager before any cards are dealt. The payoff can be much greater when the hand does break because it is rare for the player to have a stiff hand when the dealer’s up card is a seven through ace card. In this situation, the payoff odds would be the same whether the hand is a 12 or 16 because the bet is made before any cards are dealt.

Other variations of the Early Bet can also be used in the present invention. For example, to provide an added incentive for the player to make the Early Bet, Blackjack Insurance can also be included in the Early Bet. Thus, the amount that is wagered in the Early Bet also includes the amount that would be wagered separately if the Blackjack Insurance bet was made. Therefore, no separate Blackjack Insurance bet needs to be made if the Early Bet is made. Thus the game can be structured so that if the player places an Early Bet, he will automatically have insurance against the dealer having a

Blackjack, whether the upcard is a Ten or Ace. Further, Blackjack Insurance can be played as normal in addition to the Early bet.

For a better understanding of the present invention, reference is now made to FIGS. 1 to 7, which shows flow chart representations of the traditional Blackjack game and of the Blackjack game according to the present invention. The same numbers are used as references in these Figures to depict the same actions and results that occur during the different stages of the variations of the game as disclosed in this specification.

FIG. 1 is a flow chart representation of a traditional Blackjack game. The rules of the game are well known and were previously described in this specification under Background of the Invention.

FIG. 2 is a flow chart representation of the Blackjack game according to the present invention in which a Late Bet is allowed to be placed after the player has an opportunity to see his hand. As can be seen, most of the flow chart follows the flow chart of the traditional Blackjack game shown in FIG. 1. However, the version of the game shown in FIG. 2 gives the player the option of placing a Late Bet if the player has a stiff hand (i.e., a hard 12 to 16) and the dealer has a seven through ace showing. The player can make the Late Bet prior to each hit as long as the hit results in another stiff hand. The player can request hits until he or she breaks, or makes 17 through 21, or stands on his hand. This is shown by the closed loop between steps 110, 44, and 130 which are marked as “Make HI Wager”, “Player Hits”, and “Multiple Hits, Hit Insurance Loses,” respectively. If after the first hit, the player’s hand has not broken, he can then place a second Late Bet and request a second hit. The player can continue this sequence of actions until he is either broken or makes 17 through 21 or stands on his hand. If the player is broken as shown in step 48, he loses his regular bet and wins on the Late Bet as shown in step 120. If the player stands on his last hit or makes 17 through 21 as shown in step 135, then the game proceeds to step 50 and continues as described previously for the traditional game in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a variation of the Blackjack game shown in FIG. 2. As in the variation of the game shown in FIG. 2, this variation also gives the player the option of placing a Late Bet if the player has a stiff hand (i.e., a hard 12 to 16) and the dealer has a seven through ace showing. However, in contrast to the variation of the game shown in FIG. 2, the player only places a Late Bet once. He can then request multiple hits until he or she breaks or makes a 17 through 21 or stands. This is shown by the bidirectional transaction flow arrows between steps 44 and 150, which are marked “Player Hits” and “Multiple Hits Hit Insurance Pushes” respectively. The player can place a Late Bet and request a first hit. If after the first hit, the player’s hand has not broken, the Late Bet stays in place and the player can request a second hit. The player can request additional hits against the Late Bet until he is either broken, or makes 17 through 21, or stands on his hand. If the player is broken, he loses his regular bet and wins on the Late Bet as shown in step 120. If the player stands or makes 17 through 21 as shown in step 135, the game proceeds to step 50 and continues as described previously for the traditional game in FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a flow chart representation of another variation of the Blackjack game according to the present invention in which the player is allowed to place an Early Bet. As described above, an “Early Bet” is a side bet that the player places before he or she is dealt the cards. Further, this variation of the game provides for automatic Blackjack

insurance to be included in the Early Bet. As described herein, automatic Blackjack Insurance means that the Side Bet amount acts as conventional Blackjack Insurance in the event that the dealer had an ace as an upcard. If the dealer does not have Blackjack, the Side Bet reverts to Hit Insurance. Thus steps 32, 34, and 42 of the traditional game are modified to show that the Hit Insurance wins. These modified steps are shown in FIG. 4 as steps 32A, 34A, and 42A respectively. Yet further, this variation provides for the Early Bet to push when the dealer's upcard shows 2 to 6 as depicted in step 160. The Early Bet remains in play if the dealer's upcard shows any other card. The player can then request hit cards in step 44 against the Early Bet until he is either broken, or makes 17 through 21, or stands on his hand. If the player stands without requesting additional cards as shown in step 46, he loses his Hit Insurance as shown in step 162. The game then proceeds to step 50 and continues as described previously for the traditional game in FIG. 1. If the player requests additional cards and is broken as shown in step 48, he loses his regular bet and wins on the Early Bet as shown in step 120. If the player stands on his hand or makes 17 through 21 as shown in step 150, then the game proceeds to step 50 and continues as described previously for the traditional game in FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 is a variation of the Blackjack game shown in FIG. 4. The flow sequence of the game generally follows the flow sequence of the game shown in FIG. 4. However, in this variation of the game, the Early Bet loses if the dealer's upcard shows 2 to 6 as shown in step 164.

FIG. 6 is a variation of the Blackjack game shown in FIG. 4 in which Blackjack insurance is not included in the Early Bet. Thus this variation of the game retains the original steps 32, 34, and 42 of the traditional game. As in the variation of the game shown in FIG. 4, the Early Bet pushes if the dealer's upcard shows 2 to 6 as shown in step 160.

FIG. 7 is a variation of the Blackjack game shown in FIG. 6 in which the Blackjack insurance is not included in the Early Bet. As in the variation of the game shown in FIG. 6, the Early Bet loses if the dealer's upcard shows 2 to 6 as shown in step 164.

Yet other variations of the Blackjack game of the present invention are possible. Some of the other variations are briefly described below:

Version I: Late Bet—Single Card Decision (FIG. 2). In this version, the dealer begins to offer hit cards to the players in order after the initial cards have been dealt. If the dealer has a Seven through Ace showing and the player has a hard total of 12 through 16, or hits into a hard 12 through 16, they may choose to make a side wager that their next hit card will break their hand.

When the player is ready to take a "hit" card, they can place a side bet on the "Hit Insurance" bar of the Blackjack table up to the amount of the original bet. If the player's hand "breaks" after receiving a hit card, the regular wager loses (as normal) and the Hit Insurance bet wins. If the hand does not break, the Hit Insurance bet loses and play continues. If the player still has a stiff hand, they may opt to make another Hit Insurance wager.

As an example, assume that the player has 12 and takes Hit Insurance. If the player receives a 10 and breaks, he loses his original bet, but wins 2 to 1 on the side bet. If the player receives a deuce, the Hit Insurance bet loses, but the player could take another Hit Insurance bet on his new total of 14. If the player bets again and breaks, he receives a payoff, for example 1 to 1, on the side bet based on the total of 14 at the time of the bust. The payoff to the player can be based on the

point value of the hand at the time of the bust. The payoff schedule can be optimized to maximize profits for the casino while still creating enough interest for the player to continue playing.

Version II: Late Bet—Multiple Card Hits (FIG. 3). In this variation, a single Hit Insurance wager is made. This single wager is allowed to remain for multiple hits if the hit card produces another stiff hand. The hit insurance bet stays until the player either breaks his hand, decides to stand, or makes a pat hand. As described above for Version 1, the payoff can be based on the point value of the hand at the time of the bust. Version 2 of the Blackjack game according to the present invention is believed to be more advantageous for the player as the wager loses less often in comparison to Version I.

Version III: Early Bet with Payoff Schedule and Blackjack Insurance: In a third version of the Blackjack game according to the present invention, the player makes a bet before the cards are dealt that he will break his hand. In this version, the payoff to the player on the side bet can be much higher because the odds are greater that the dealer has 7 through Ace showing and the player has a hitting hand. The bet remains as in Version II until the player either stands (loses the side bet), hits into a 17 through 21 (loses the side bet), or breaks (wins the side bet). If the dealer has a 2 through 6 as an upcard, the bet will either lose or push before any hit cards are delivered.

In addition, in order to make the bet more attractive in this version of the Blackjack game, an Early Hit Insurance bet could also include Blackjack insurance. This would be insurance against any dealer Blackjack when the dealer has either a Ten or an Ace as an upcard. If the dealer has an Ace showing, the player's bet would already act as Blackjack Insurance. Therefore, the player would not have to take regular Blackjack Insurance. If the dealer does not have a Blackjack, the bet remains and plays as Hit Insurance with the higher payoff chart.

However, in this version of the Blackjack game, the player could still opt to take regular Blackjack insurance along with their early bet if desired. As in Versions I and II described above, the payoff to the player on the side bet could be varied according to the hand held by the player when he busts.

Version IV: Early Bet with Blackjack Insurance and Flat Payoff (FIG. 5). In this version of the Blackjack game according to the present invention, the side bet that the hand will be broken is made before the hands are dealt. Blackjack insurance is included in the side bet. However, in this version, the player is offered a flat payoff for breaking hands irrespective of the point value of the player's hand. For example, the payoff to the player can be 2 to 1 or 3 to 1. This version simplifies the game for the dealer as it eliminates the complex payoff schedule (which varies the payoff according to the hand held by the player when he busts) of the previous versions. This version also simplifies the decision making for the player, as the player would have an idea what to bet in proportion to his original bet.

In this version, the Blackjack insurance could be either eliminated (FIG. 7) or reduced depending on the house advantages generated. Ideally the payoff would be the same for a breaking hand as a winning hand when the dealer has a Blackjack in order to keep the game as simple as possible for the dealers and players.

Version V: Early Bet with Push on Dealer Upcard of 2 through 6 (FIGS. 4 and 6). Yet another version of the Blackjack game according to the present invention increases

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the attractiveness of the side bet to the player by allowing the Early bet to push when the dealer shows a 2 through 6 as an upcard. This version decreases the house advantage, but provides a greater incentive for a player to make the bet.

Version VI: Early Bet with Blackjack Insurance and Reduced Regular Bet Win. This version of the Blackjack game according to the present invention allows a winning Hit Insurance bet to be paid at a higher payoff schedule. In this version, the regular bet only wins half (or some other fractional portion) of the original bet if the player does not break and if the player beats the dealer's hand.

Version VII: Early Bet with Blackjack Insurance and Random Payoff Win. In this version of the Blackjack game according to the present invention, the player makes a minimal bet made before the hand is dealt that the player will break the hand. If the player hand breaks, he gets to operate a mechanism that generates a random win amount. This procedure gives the player the incentive of potentially winning a large jackpot for a minimal bet. For higher limit games, a larger minimum bet could be offered with a proportionally balanced random win.

Version VIII: Early Bet that Moves to Regular Bet on Dealer Upcard of 2 through 6. In yet another version of the Blackjack game according to the present invention, the side bet is moved to the regular bet when the dealer has a 2 through 6. This procedure keeps the side bet in play more often than the procedure of Version VI in which the side bet is pushed. This variation of the game will allow the player to "press" or increase his wager when the dealer's upcard indicates that the odds are in favor of the player winning his wager.

It will be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the above examples of the Blackjack game according to the present invention are not all-encompassing. Yet other versions of the game can be developed using the principle of hit insurance introduced herein. The development of these versions is well within the capabilities of one of ordinary skill in the art.

Yet further, the above versions could be combined to create new versions of the Blackjack game according to the present invention. For example, any of the above Early bets could be played without the incorporation of the Blackjack insurance or combined with a Late Bet version. This variation of the Blackjack game can allow for the house advantage to be adjusted through different payoffs or by the elimination of the Blackjack insurance.

Yet further, additional versions of the Blackjack game according to the present invention could incorporate combinations of Versions I through VIII into one game. The player could have the option of combinations of bets. As the payoff schedule is higher for the one card hit (Version 1), the player may opt to play aggressively for the larger payoff or play more conservatively and still have the "insurance" of Version II with a smaller payoff. Also, variations of the Early Bet can be combined with different versions of the Late Bet offering the option of playing either version, or both on a single hand. This would offer the most strategies for the player, however would be more difficult for the dealer. This combination may be the preferred version for a video slot machine. Furthermore, a payoff could be associated with a situation where both a player and the dealer receive Blackjack. In such instance, a fixed payoff amount, fixed odds payoff, random payoff amount or a progressive payoff amount may be employed.

Thus it will be seen that the incorporation of Hit Insurance into Blackjack creates a game that may increase the volume

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and hold percentage of traditional Blackjack games, while offering more fun, strategy and entertainment for players. This modification of the Blackjack game could substantially increase the overall revenues for casinos while providing more options for the player.

It should be understood, of course, that the foregoing relates to preferred embodiments of the invention and that modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.

We claim:

1. A method of playing a version of Blackjack using at least one conventional deck of 52 playing cards, wherein each player may place conventional "21" wagers comprising the steps of:

requiring a player to place a conventional 21 wager in order to receive a hand of cards;

dealing the player a hand of cards;

dealing a dealer a hand of cards that is completed currently or after the player is dealt a hand of cards; and allowing the player the option of playing an initial side bet that he will break a hand total of 21 before or after the player receives an initial hand, this option being allowable if the player has a hand total between a first value and a second value and also if a dealer has a third value through a fourth value showing and the method further comprising:

requiring the player to lose the initial side bet if the player does not break a hand total of 21 after receiving a first hit card or if the player's hand of cards falls between a fifth value and a sixth value after receiving the first hit card.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising allowing the player the option of making a subsequent side bet prior to each subsequent hit card if the player has a hand total between the first value and the second value wherein the subsequent side bet is that the player will be broken on each subsequent hit card and wherein the player loses the subsequent side bet if the player is not broken on a subsequent hit card or if the player's hand total falls between the fifth value and the sixth value after receiving a subsequent hit card.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the player wins on the subsequent side bet and loses the conventional wager when the player's hand total exceeds 21 after receiving a subsequent hit card.

4. The method of claim 2 wherein the player loses the subsequent side bet and wins the conventional wager when the player's hand total equals 21 or less after receiving the first hit card and exceeds the dealer's hand total.

5. The method of claim 2 wherein the player loses the subsequent side bet when the player stands after receiving a subsequent hit card.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks or the player pushes, the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses if the dealer has a winning hand.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the player wins on the initial side bet and loses the conventional wager when the player's hand total exceeds 21 after receiving the first hit card.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the player loses the initial side bet and wins the conventional wager when the player's hand total equals 21 or less after receiving the first hit card and exceeds the dealer hand total.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the player loses the initial side bet when the player stands after receiving the first hit.

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10. The method of claim 9 wherein the player wins the conventional wager bet if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks or if the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand or the player loses if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein, as long as the player has a hand total between the first value and the second value, the player is allowed to take subsequent hits and the player loses the side bet if the player is not broken after receiving a subsequent hit card or if the player's hand falls between the fifth value and the sixth value after receiving a subsequent hit card, and the player keeps the side bet if the player's hand total falls between the first value and the second value after receiving a subsequent hit card.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the player wins on the player's side bet and the player loses on the player's conventional wager when the player's hand exceeds 21 after receiving a subsequent hit card.

13. The method of claim 11 wherein the player loses the player's side bet and the player wins the player's conventional wager when the player's hand equals 21 or less after receiving a subsequent hit card and exceeds the dealer's hand total.

14. The method of claim 11 wherein the player loses the player's side bet when the player stands after receiving a subsequent hit card.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes the conventional wager if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses the conventional wager if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the player wins one of a fixed payoff amount, fixed odds payoff, random payoff amount and a progressive payoff amount when the player and the dealer receive a Blackjack.

17. A method of playing Blackjack using at least one conventional deck of 52 playing cards, wherein each player may place conventional "21" wagers, comprising the steps of:

requiring a player to place a conventional 21 wager in order to receive a hand of cards;

allowing the player the option of playing an initial side bet that the player will break a hand total of 21 when the player receives hit cards; wherein the cards are played in a traditional or "natural" sequence, whereby the order in which said cards are dealt and the blackjack basic strategy are not altered;

dealing the player a hand of cards;

dealing a dealer a hand of cards; and

wherein the initial side bet pushes if the dealer has an upcard having a value of between a seventh and an eighth value and the initial side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the player receives Blackjack insurance against the dealer having a Blackjack when the dealer has an ace or ten value card facing up when the player places the initial side bet.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the initial side bet loses if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the initial side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card.

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21. The method of claim 19 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes the conventional wager if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses the conventional wager if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

23. The method of claim 19 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager follows traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is 3 to 1.

24. The method of claim 19 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager is reduced below the payoff according to traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is greater than 3 to 1.

25. The method of claim 18 wherein the payoff on the side bet is determined by the player being allowed to operate a mechanism that generates a random win amount.

26. The method of claim 17 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card.

27. The method of claim 17 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes the conventional wager if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses the conventional wager if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

29. The method of claim 17 wherein the initial side bet pushes if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the player's side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card.

31. The method of claim 29 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

33. The method of claim 17 wherein the initial side bet loses if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the initial side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein the player is given hit cards and the side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card.

35. The method of claim 33 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

37. The method of claim 17 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager follows traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is 1.5 to 1.

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38. The method of claim 17 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager is reduced below the payoff according to traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is greater than 1.5 to 1.

39. The method of claim 17 wherein the player's side bet is moved to the player's conventional wager if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the player's side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

40. The method of claim 17 wherein the initial side bet pushes or receives a payoff if the player has a natural Blackjack.

41. A method of playing a version of Blackjack using at least one conventional deck of 52 playing cards, wherein each player may place conventional "21" wagers comprising the steps of:

requiring a player to place a conventional 21 wager in order to receive a hand of cards;

dealing the player a hand of cards;

dealing a dealer a hand of cards that is completed concurrently or after the player is dealt a hand of cards; and allowing the player the option of playing an initial side bet that he will break a hand total of 21 before or after the player receives an initial hand, wherein the cards are played in a traditional or "natural" sequence, whereby the order in which said cards are dealt and the blackjack basic strategy are not altered.

42. The method of claim 41 further comprising:

allowing the player the option of making a the first bet and subsequent side bets prior to each hit card if the player has a hand total between a first value and a second value;

wherein the side bet is that the player will be broken on the next hit card and wherein the player loses the side bet if the player is not broken on the next hit card or if the player's hand total falls between a third value and a fourth value after receiving the next hit card.

43. The method of claim 42 wherein the player wins on the side bet and loses the conventional wager when the player's hand total exceeds 21 after receiving a subsequent hit card.

44. The method of claim 42 wherein the player loses the side bet and wins the conventional wager when the player's hand total equals 21 or less and exceeds the dealer hand total after receiving the hit card.

45. The method of claim 42 wherein, as long as the player has a hand total between the first value and the second value, the player is allowed to take subsequent hit cards and the player loses the side bet if the player is not broken after receiving a subsequent hit card or if the player's hand falls between the third value and the fourth value after receiving a subsequent hit card, and the player keeps the side bet if the player's hand total falls between the first value and the second value after receiving the subsequent hit card.

46. The method of claim 45 wherein the player wins on the player's side bet and the player loses on the player's conventional wager when the player's hand exceeds 21 after receiving the subsequent hit card.

47. The method of claim 45 wherein the player loses the player's side bet and the player wins the player's conventional wager when the player's hand equals 21 or less after receiving the subsequent hit card and exceeds the dealer's hand total.

48. The method of claim 40 wherein the player loses the player's side bet when the player stands after receiving the hit card.

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49. The method of claim 48 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes the conventional wager if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses the conventional wager if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

50. The method of claim 41 wherein the player loses the side bet when the player stands after receiving the hit card.

51. The method of claim 50 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks or the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand or the player loses if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

52. The method of claim 50 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, or the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses if the dealer has a winning hand.

53. A method of playing Blackjack using at least one conventional deck of 52 playing cards, wherein each player may place conventional "21" wagers, comprising the steps of:

requiring a player to place a conventional 21 wager in order to receive a hand of cards;

allowing the player the option of playing an initial side bet, prior to receiving the player's hand, that the player will break a hand total of 21 when the player receives hit cards;

dealing the player a hand of cards;

dealing the dealer a hand of cards;

allowing the player the option of playing an initial side bet that he will break a hand total of 21 before or after the player receives an initial hand, this option being allowable if the player has a hand total between a first value and a second value and also if a dealer has a third value through a fourth value showing and the method further comprising:

requiring the player to lose the initial side bet if the player does not break a hand total of 21 after receiving a first hit card or if the player's hand of cards falls between a fifth value and a sixth value after receiving the first hit card.

54. A method as in claim 53 wherein the initial side bet pushes if the dealer has an upcard having a value of between a seventh and an eighth value and the initial side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

55. The method of claim 54 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card.

56. The method of claim 54 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

57. The method of claim 56 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes the conventional wager if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses the conventional wager if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

58. The method of claim 54 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager follows traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is 1.5 to 1.

59. The method of claim 54 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager is reduced below the payoff according to traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is greater than 1.5 to 1.

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60. The method of claim 53 wherein the initial side bet loses if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the initial side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

61. The method of claim 60 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card.

62. The method of claim 60 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

63. The method of claim 60 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes the conventional wager if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses the conventional wager if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

64. The method of claim 60 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager follows traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is 3 to 1.

65. The method of claim 60 wherein the payoff on the conventional wager is reduced below the payoff according to traditional Blackjack pay-off rules and the payoff on the side bet is greater than 3 to 1.

66. The method of claim 53 wherein the initial side bet pushes if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the player's side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

67. The method of claim 66 wherein the player is given hit card and the initial side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card and loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

68. The method of claim 67 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than

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the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

69. The method of claim 53 wherein the initial side bet loses if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the initial side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

70. The method of claim 69 wherein the player is given hit cards and the side bet wins if the player's hand is broken after receiving a hit card.

71. The method of claim 69 wherein the player is given hit cards and the initial side bet loses if the player stands or makes 17 through 21 after receiving a hit card.

72. The method of claim 71 wherein the player wins the conventional wager if the player's hand value is greater than the dealer's hand or the dealer breaks, the player pushes if the dealer has an equal hand, and the player loses if the dealer has a hand whose total is closer to 21 than the hand held by the player.

73. The method of claim 53 wherein the payoff on the side bet is determined by the player being allowed to operate a mechanism that generates a random win amount.

74. The method of claim 53 wherein the player's side bet is moved to the player's conventional wager if the dealer has an upcard having a value between a seventh and an eighth value and the player's side bet remains in play if the dealer does not have an upcard having a value between the seventh and the eighth value.

75. The method of claim 54 wherein the initial side bet pushes or receives a payoff if the player has a natural Blackjack.

* * * * *

D. U.S. Patent No. 6,375,190 to Kocher, filed on October 2, 2000

See, e.g., column 1, lines 49-54



US006375190B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Kocher

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 6,375,190 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Apr. 23, 2002**

(54) **DOUBLE-HIT BLACKJACK**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **09/676,564**

(22) Filed: **Oct. 2, 2000**

(51) Int. Cl.⁷ **A63F 1/00**

(52) U.S. Cl. **273/303; 273/292; 273/274;**
463/12

(58) Field of Search 273/303, 292,
273/274; 463/12

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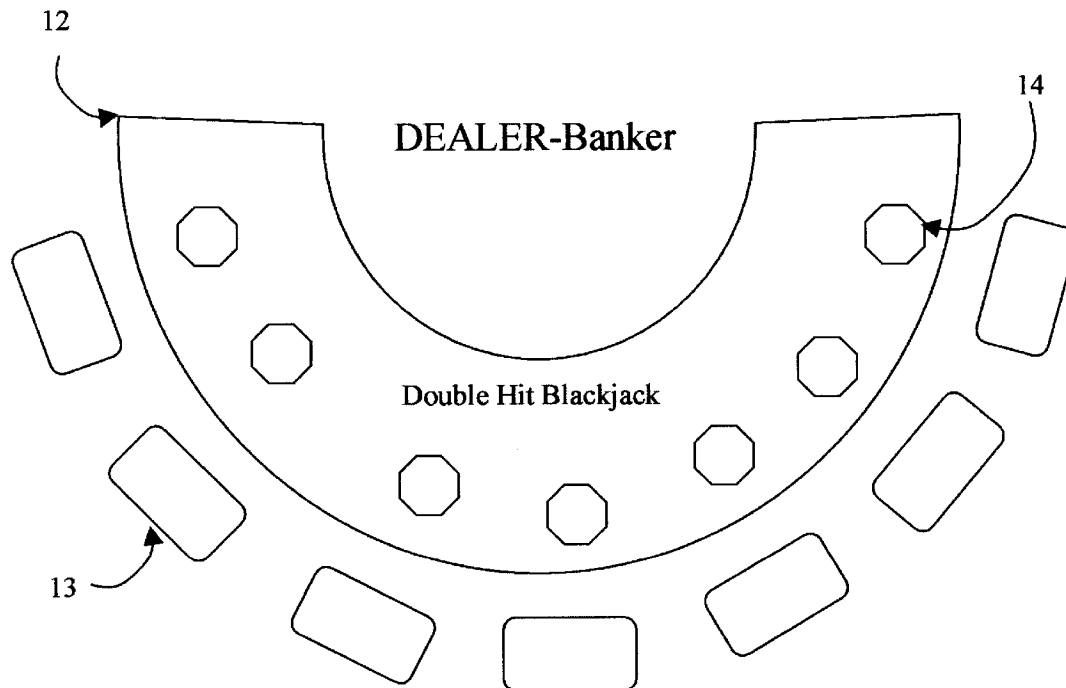
Primary Examiner—Jeanette Chapman

Assistant Examiner—Nini F. Legesse

(57) **ABSTRACT**

This invention adds new excitement to a blackjack type of
game allowing the player holding a poor hand more options
and chances to gamble for higher returns. The invention
allows the player to take two cards ("double-hit") or three
cards ("triple-hit") and if the player does not go over 21 and
beats the dealer, the player receives odds on the original bet.
Alternate versions include allowing the player to double his
bet or decrease the original bet in half. Also within this scope
of this invention is keeping the original bet, varying the
original bet and/or receiving odds against the original bet
depending on the number of cards declared.

7 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets



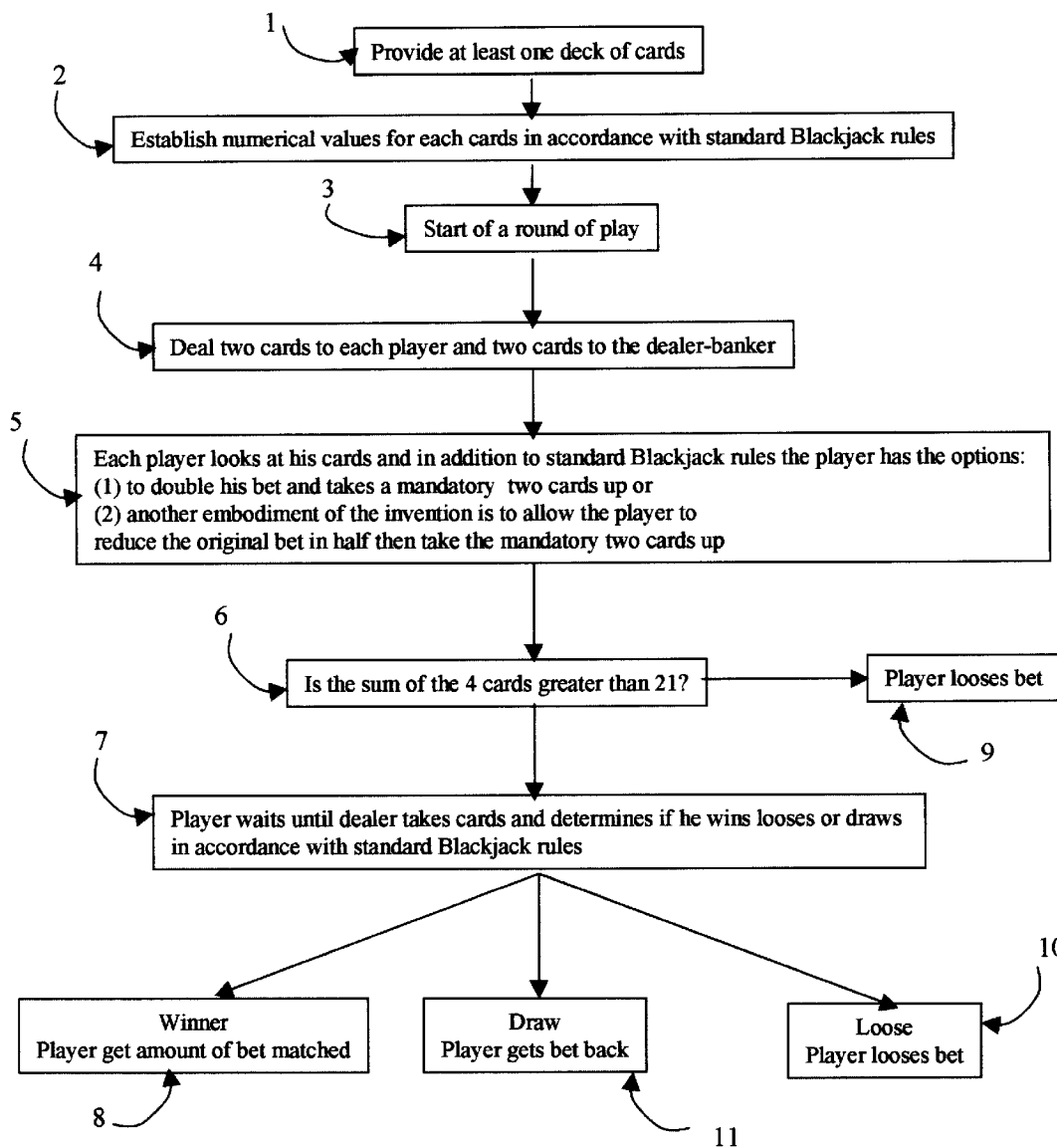


FIG 1

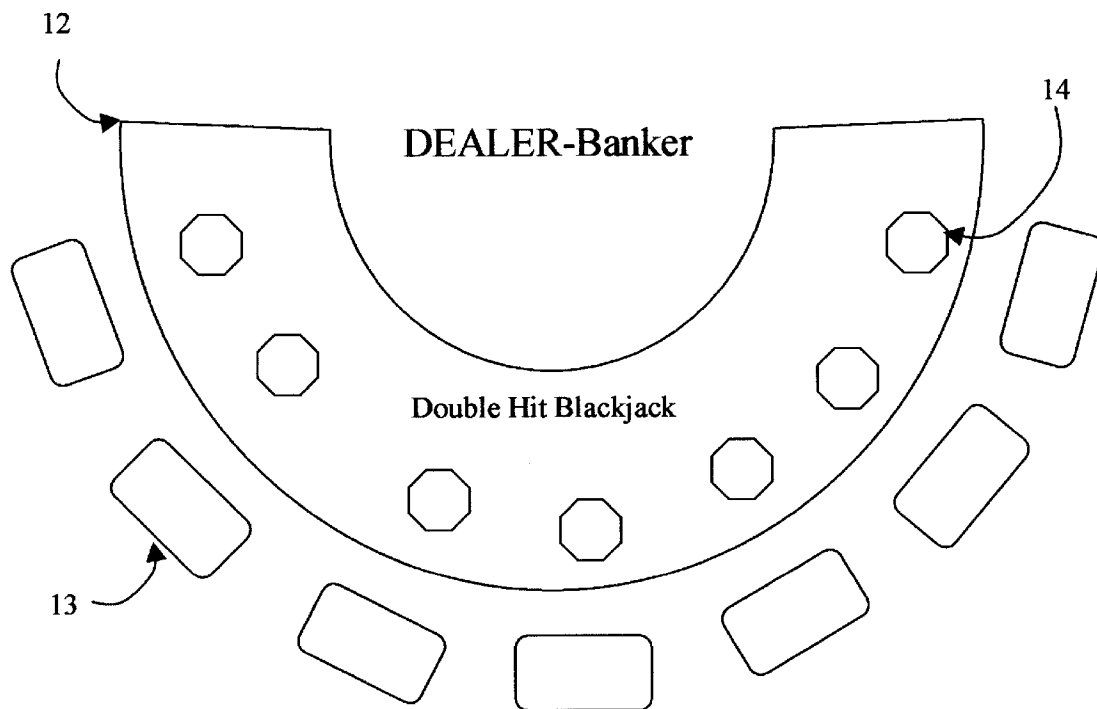


FIG 2

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DOUBLE-HIT BLACKJACK**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

Not Applicable

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not Applicable

REFERENCE TO A MICROFICHE APPENDIX

Not Applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**1. Field of the Invention**

This invention relates to methods of playing games and methods of amusement.

2. State of the Art

The card game of Blackjack is commonly played in casinos throughout the world. The game has standard rules, which allow players to understand the odds and play in any casinos. A Las Vegas visitor typically wanders from casino to casino faced with large rooms of blackjack tables. The game is generally the same, only the casino name changes. Various patents attempt to modify the rules to add diversity. Many of the patented games have not been successfully implemented primarily because the visiting gamblers don't want to take the time to learn the game and are unsure of the new game's odds and player's strategy. Casinos need to attract more customers. This has lead in the rise of offering new games, typically involving a side bet.

Blackjack typically allows modifying the original bet after the first set of cards is dealt. The most common post initial dealing rules are 'doubling down', 'insurance' or 'surrendering'. 'Doubling down' involves doubling the original bet and taking one card down and standing pat on the hand. 'Insurance' is an option when the dealer is showing an ace and the players are offered the opportunity to insure up to one-half of their bet by betting that the dealer has a 10 or face card as the down card. 'Surrendering' is used when the dealer is showing an excellent hand such as a face card, 10 or ace and the player has a very poor hand such as a sum of 14, 15, or 16. 'Doubling down' is typically recommended when the player has an excellent hand, such as a 9, 10, face card or ace and the dealer is showing a 2,3,4,5, or 6. The challenge is inventing a new, interesting, and easily understood method of 21. These post initial deal rules allow more options for the player thereby making the game more interesting and potentially giving the player better odds. But these rules have been widely adopted and no longer add to the excitement or novelty of the game.

SUMMARY

This invention allows for the player to examine his dealt hand of two cards then comparing his hand to the dealer's face-up card, the player is allowed to keep or modify his initial bet and draw a mandatory two cards. This invention adds new interest, is easily understood, and potentially allows better odds for the player or house depending on the selected odds ratio.

One aspect of this invention is a method of playing cards between a dealer and at least one player where the player may modify his original bet, such as double the original bet, then take a mandatory two cards and stand on the hand. If

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the player beats the dealer using traditional Blackjack rules, the player would be paid the traditional matching 1:1 or more and if the dealer ties the player, the player would traditionally 'push' or receive his original bet back.

Another aspect of this invention is a method of playing cards between a dealer and at least one player where the player may modify his original bet, such as cut-in-half the original bet, then take a mandatory two cards and stand on the hand. If the player beats the dealer using traditional Blackjack rules, the player would be paid the traditional matching 1:1 or better odds and if the dealer ties the player, the player would traditionally 'push' or receive his original bet back.

DRAWING FIGURES

FIG. 1 shows a block diagram of the main embodiment of the Double Hit Blackjack method.

FIG. 2 is one preferred type of a playing table layout.

LIST OF REFERENCE NUMERALS

Item 1 provides playing cards

Item 2 establishes card values in accordance with standard Blackjack rules

Item 3 is the start of the game after bets are placed

Item 4 is each player and dealer-banker gets the initial two cards

Item 5 is the double hit Blackjack options in addition to traditional Blackjack rules

Item 6 is the value of the player's cards after the two additional cards have been dealt

Item 7 is if the player did not exceed 21 with the 4 cards total

Item 8 is a winner if the player beats the dealer after the dealer takes his cards in accordance with standard Blackjack rules.

Item 9 is if the player's hand exceeds the sum of 21

Item 10 is if the player does not beat the dealer's hand

Item 11 is if the player and dealer have the same sum "a push"

Item 12 is the standard Blackjack table

Item 13 is a player's seat

Item 14 is the player's betting position or betting box

DESCRIPTION-MAIN EMBODYMENT

The invention of the Double-Hit Blackjack is used when the player has a poor hand and the dealer has an excellent hand. For example if the dealer is showing a 7, 8, 9, 10, face card, or ace and the player has a total of 4, 5, or 6, the current strategy recommends that the player take at least two cards.

FIG. 2 shows the game table 12, the player positions and seats 13 and the betting positions or bet boxes 14. FIG. 1 shows the overall process, which begins with the basic Blackjack game, starting with a deck of cards 1 with traditional Blackjack values for numbered cards, face cards, and aces 2. The players place their bets and the round starts 3. Two cards are dealt to each player and two cards to the dealer 4. Each player looks at his cards 5. The player's options include the standard Blackjack options such as stand pat with the cards dealt, double down, split pairs, or the standard hit. The player's decision is based on his cards in relationship to dealer's face up card. If the player has a poor hand such a sum of 4, 5, 6, or 12, 13, 14, 15, or 16, the player will take different actions based on what the dealer is

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showing. Double-Hit Blackjack adds several optional rules based on the casino's view if double hitting will help their odds of winning. Option 1 involves using 'Double-Hit' to allow the player to double his bet and take two cards face up 6. If he busts, he is out 9. If his cards total has less than 22, he can stay and play through until the dealer determines his final hand's total 7. Another embodiment is Option 2 involving using 'Double-Hit' to protect a bet 5 by allowing the player to remove one-half of his bet and take two cards face up 6. If he busts, he is out 9. If his cards total has less than 22, he can stay and play through until the dealer determines his final hand's total 7. In accordance with standard Blackjack rules a winner 8 is declared if the player has more than the dealer and less than 22 and the player receives a match of the amount of money in the bet box 14. If the player and dealer match point sums draw 11, then the player gets the amount remaining in the bet box 14 back. If the dealer's hand is greater than the player's hand and less than 22, 10 the player loses the amount of money in the bet box 14.

DESCRIPTION AND OPERATION- ALTERNATIVE EMBODIMENTS

Alternate embodiments include allowing only the doubling of a bet prior to taking the Double-Hit. Another embodiment would be only allowing the reducing of a bet by one-half prior to taking the Double-Hit. Another embodiment could be varying the Double-Hit cards up or cards down. An additional embodiment could be "Triple-Hit" or more where the payout odds would vary such as two or three to one for declaring a "triple-hit". Double-Hit and Triple-Hit could be used in conjunction with in the same game. An example would be if the player has a very poor hand such as a total of 5 and the dealer is showing a face card. The player could decide to match his bet and "Double-Hit" or not match his bet and "Triple-Hit" in hopes of receiving a two-for-one pay out or better.

Alternate embodiments include varying the payout odds based on the number of cards taken. For example, the player could take a Double-Hit and if successful, receive a three-to-two payout of the original bet. The player would apply this strategy if the dealer has poor cards such as a 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 showing.

CONCLUSION, RAMIFICATIONS, AND SCOPE

The invention scope includes modifying the original bet and taking a predetermined number of cards of two or

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greater and standing with this number of cards. Also within this scope of this invention is keeping the original bet, varying the original bet and/or receiving odds against the original bet depending on the number of cards declared. Using the terms of "Double-Hit" (two cards), "Triple-Hit" (three-cards) or "Quad-Hit" (four-cards) is envisioned to be used. This invention will add new excitement to the game of blackjack allowing the player holding a poor hand more options and chances to gamble for higher returns.

What I claim as my invention is:

1. A method of playing a blackjack-type game between a player and a dealer-banker wherein the object of the game is to score higher than the dealer yet remain under a bust number comprising the steps of:

providing at least one deck of playing cards;
establishing numerical values to each playing card;
the player placing an original wager;
dealing two cards to each player and two cards to the dealer-banker;
the player viewing his card's sum and the face up card(s) of the dealer then deciding in accordance with gaming establishment rules whether to (1) stand, (2) split a pair, (3) double down, (4) surrender, or (5) hit a card;

including wherein if the player decides to modify his bet in exchange for being required to be dealt a fixed number of cards greater than one;

determine if the player exceeded the allowable limit such as 21

payout the winnings in accordance with preset odd ratios.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the original bet wager can be doubled prior to receiving the additional fixed number of cards.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the original bet wager can be cut in half prior to receiving the fixed number of draw cards.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the number of cards is fixed at two.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the payout odds vary by taking at least two cards.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the number of cards is fixed at least three cards.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein various odds are offered to beat the dealer by taking a least three mandatory cards.

* * * * *

E. U.S. Patent No. 6,877,745 to Walker, filed on June 23, 2000.

See, e.g., column 1, lines 41-45



US006877745B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Walker et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** US 6,877,745 B1
(45) **Date of Patent:** Apr. 12, 2005

(54) **GAMES OF CHANCE WITH
PLAYER-SPECIFIED ELEMENTS**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **09/602,869**

(22) Filed: **Jun. 23, 2000**

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 60/189,218, filed on Mar. 14,
2000.

(51) **Int. Cl.⁷** **A63F 1/00**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **273/292**

(58) **Field of Search** 273/274, 292,
273/309; 463/12, 13

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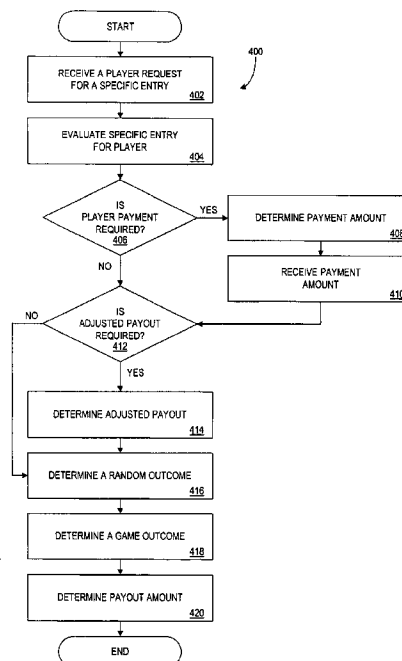
Primary Examiner—William M. Pierce

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Michael D. Downs

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A game to be modified in accordance with the invention
involves a first random outcome and a second random
outcome that are combined according to game rules to
produce a game outcome. The game is administered by
receiving a player request for a specific entry, the specific
entry replacing one of the random outcomes and being
selected from a finite set of possibilities not determined by
chance. The requested specific entry affects the probable
outcome of the game. The specific entry is combined with
the remaining one of the random outcomes according to the
game rules to determine the game outcome. According to
one embodiment, the specific entry may be a score such as
18 which replaces the player's hand in the game of black-
jack.

37 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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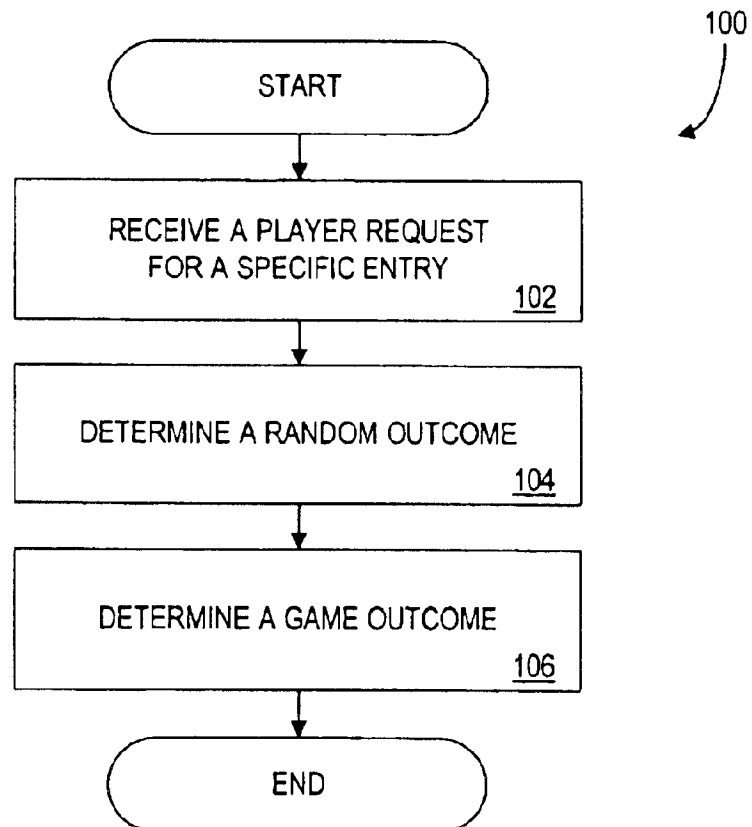


FIG. 1

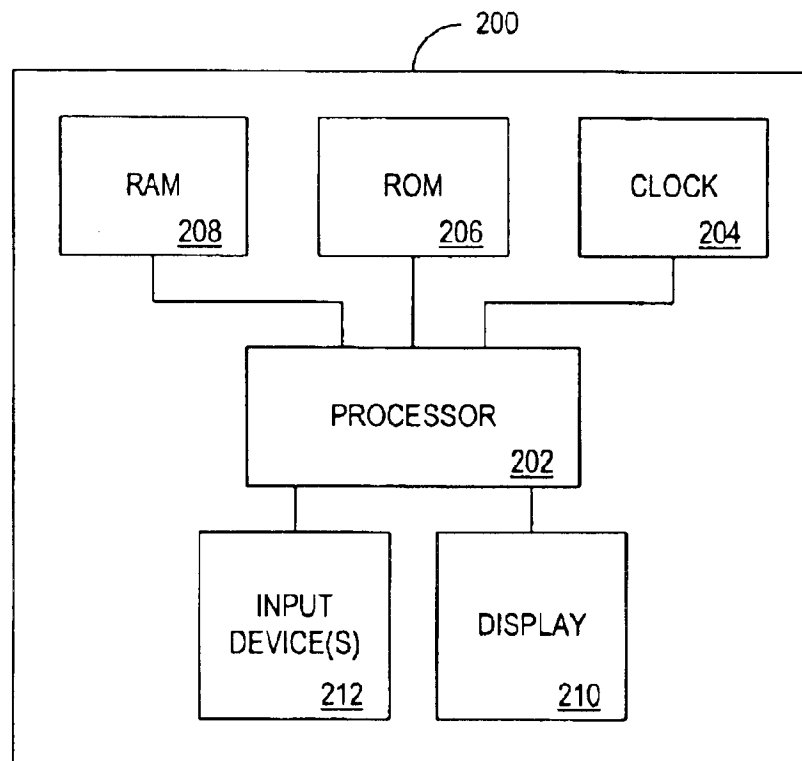


FIG. 2

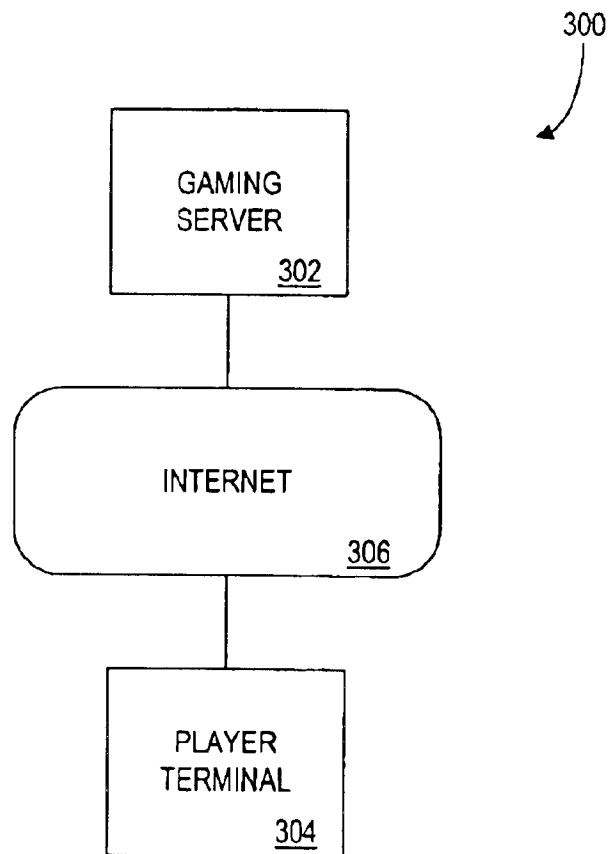


FIG. 3

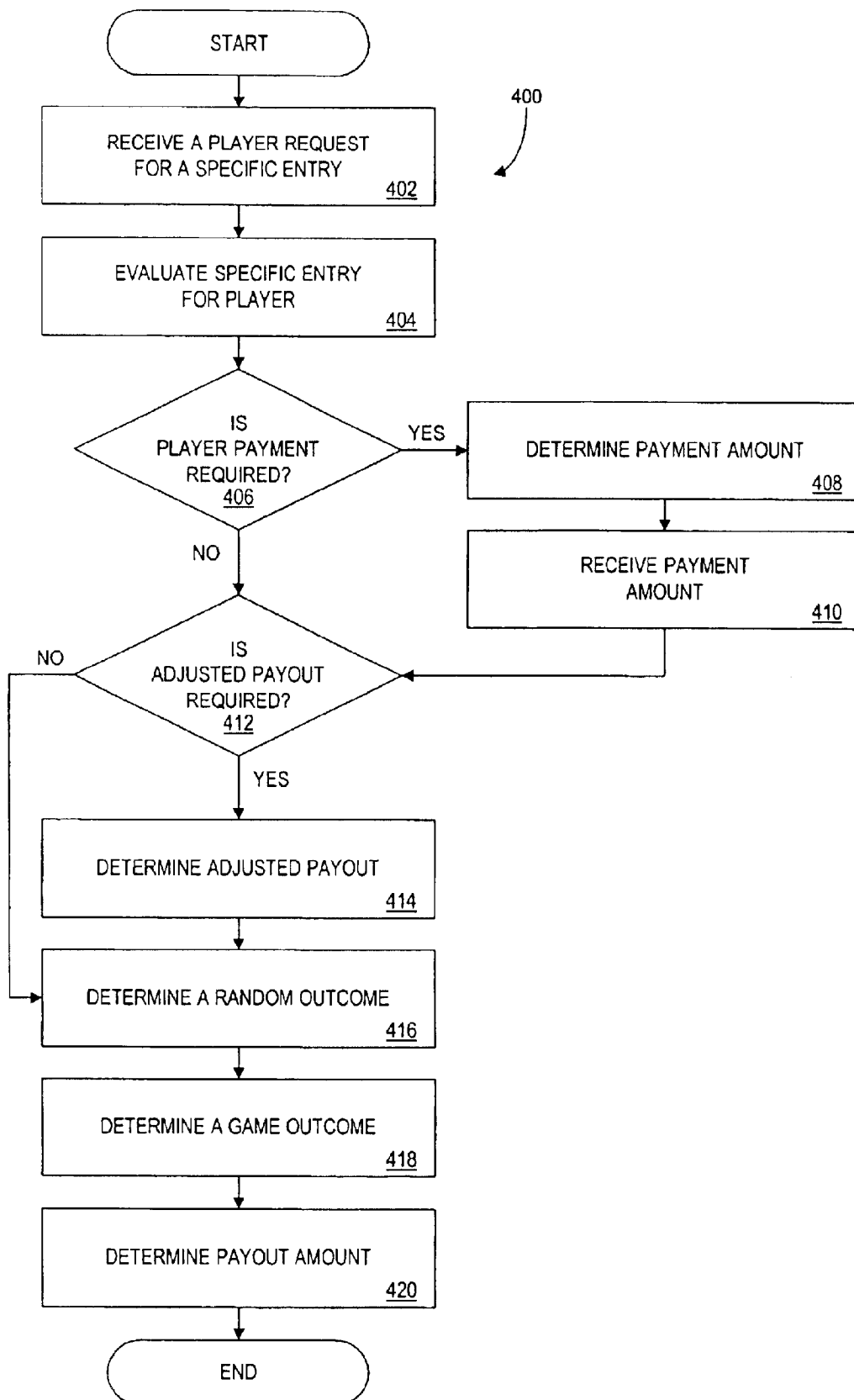


FIG. 4

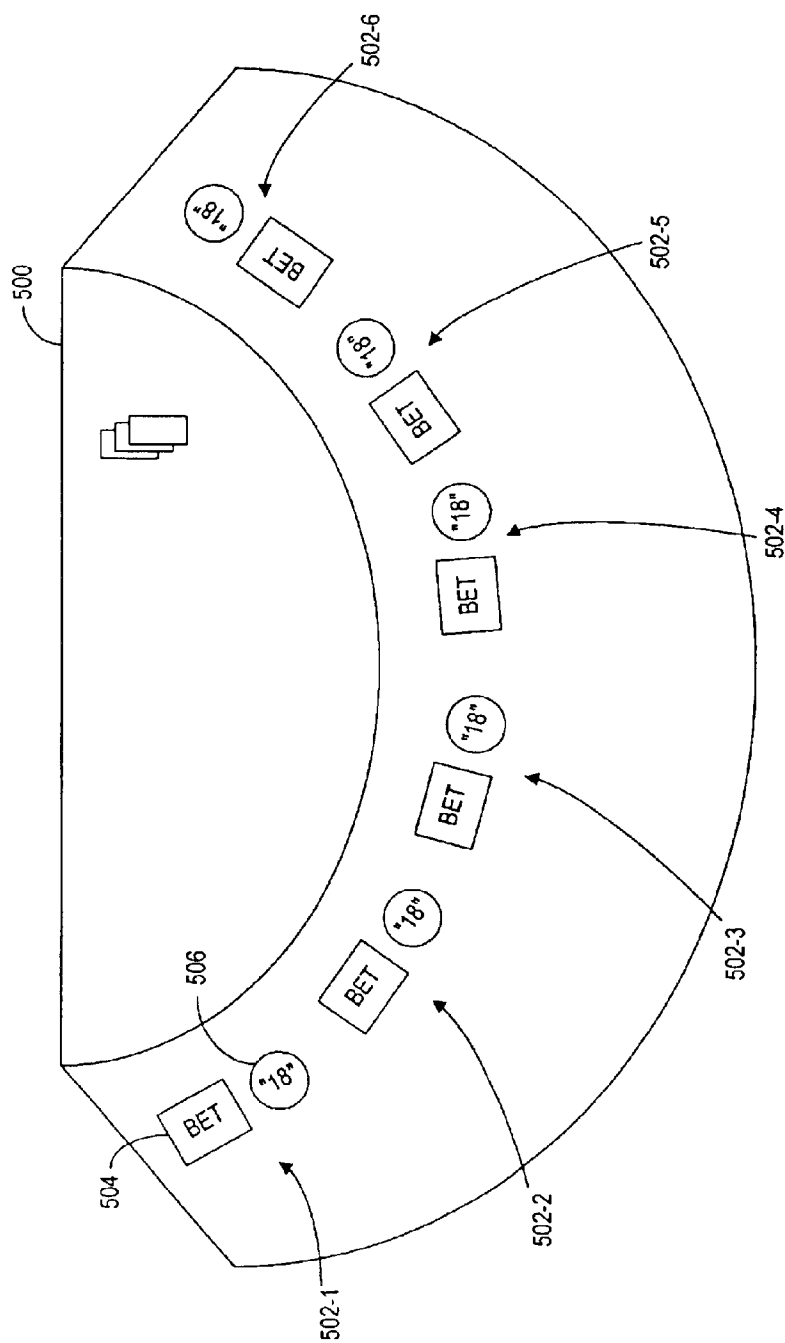


FIG. 5

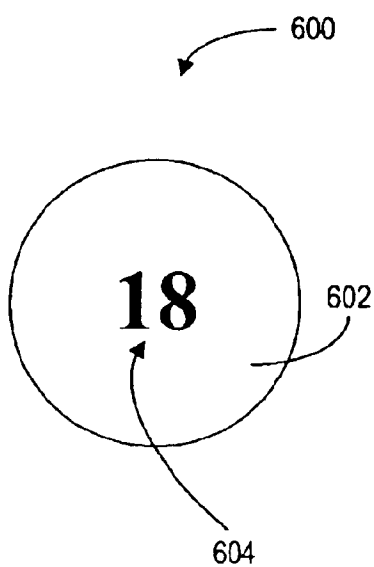


FIG. 6

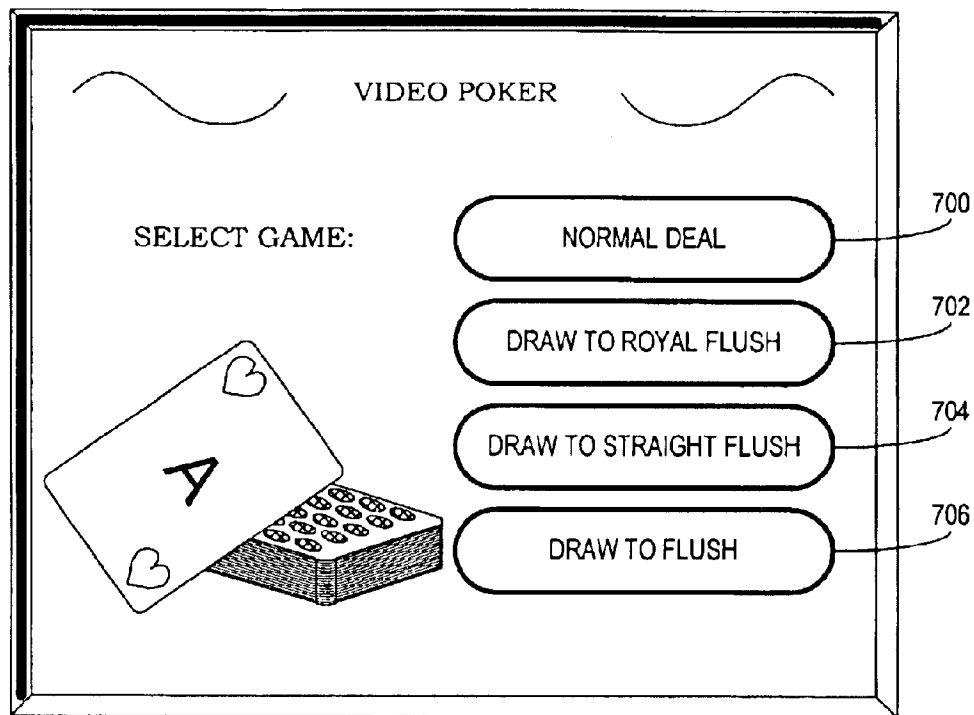


FIG. 7

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GAMES OF CHANCE WITH PLAYER-SPECIFIED ELEMENTS

The present Application claims the benefit of prior provisional patent application Ser. No. 60/189,218, filed Mar. 14, 2000, which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD

The present invention is concerned with games of chance, including slot machines and other games that are suitable for play in a casino and/or as computer video games.

BACKGROUND

In many games of chance, the game outcome is determined on the basis of two or more independent outcomes. For example, in the card game blackjack, the outcome of the game depends on comparing the respective scores of a randomly dealt player's hand (first random outcome) and a randomly dealt dealer's hand (second random outcome).

As another example, in a video poker game based on the game of draw poker, the outcome of a hand depends upon the initial, randomly dealt hand configuration (first random outcome) as well as the cards randomly drawn (second random outcome) to replace discards from the initial hand configuration.

As still another example, the outcome of a play cycle in a slot machine is determined by a combination of the respective random outcomes that correspond to the final positions of the reels of the slot machine.

Because these games involve more than one random outcome, there is more than one way that the player may lose or may suffer bad luck. For example, in blackjack, the player may lose either by "busting" (exceeding a twenty-one count in the player's hand) or by having a lower count than the dealer. If a player suffers a run of bad luck, he/she may become frustrated and cease playing the game. This is disadvantageous to the proprietor of the gaming establishment or device.

It is considered desirable from the point of view of the game proprietor to give the player more options relative to the game so that the player feels that he/she has a better opportunity to change his/her luck and therefore continue playing. Certain known modifications to popular games have attempted to provide the player with additional options. For example, in U.S. Pat. No. 5,660,391, issued to Klasee, a variation on blackjack is disclosed. According to this variation, the player places a bet on one of five possible hand outcomes, namely blackjack, twenty-one, twenty, nineteen or eighteen. Four cards are dealt and using those cards the best ranking blackjack hand is assembled. If the resulting hand matches the player's bet, then the player wins.

According to another known variation on blackjack, casinos issue promotional coupons that may be presented at a blackjack table as a "free ace" to form part of the player's hand.

U.S. Pat. No. 4,200,291, issued to Hooker, discloses a modified slot machine in which the player can select one or two of the slot machine reels to be held at the same position at which the reels ended the previous play cycle and which was randomly determined. If the player exercises this option, then only one or two reels are spun in the next cycle in an attempt to match the position of the held reel or reels.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,068,552, issued May 30, 2000, entitled, "A Gaming Device and Method of Operation Thereof," and commonly assigned with this application, discloses a slot

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machine in which the player is allowed to customize parameters such as payouts or frequency of winning outcomes.

It is also a common practice in state-run lotteries to permit players either to specify the numbers to be played or to have the numbers chosen automatically and randomly by computer.

It would be desirable to provide improved games of chance that would encourage the player to continue playing and to attempt to change his luck in cases where a losing streak has occurred. It would also be desirable to provide improved games that are simpler and easier to play and therefore generally more attractive to players.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to an aspect of the invention there is provided a method of administering a game, where the game involves at least a first random outcome and a second random outcome combined according to game rules to produce a game outcome, and the method includes receiving a player request for a specific entry instead of one of the random outcomes, wherein the specific entry is selected from a finite set of possibilities not determined by chance and affects a likelihood of a game outcome. The method also includes combining the specific entry and the remaining one of the random outcomes according to the game rules to determine the game outcome.

In an embodiment of the invention applied as a modification of blackjack, the specific entry is a specific score requested by the player to replace either the player's hand or dealer's hand. For example, the player may request a score of 18 to be compared against the dealer's hand, or may request that the dealer's hand be replaced with a score of 18 and that the player's hand be compared against that score. The specific entry may be requested by placing a betting chip in an appropriate circle in a blackjack table to indicate that the player is requesting the specific entry. As an alternative, the specific entry may be represented by a game piece, such as a plastic item bearing the indicia "18" to indicate that the player has "bought" a player's hand score of 18.

As understood from examples mentioned above, it is contemplated to practice the invention in the environment of a casino. It is also contemplated to practice the invention in video gaming devices and/or by means of gaming sites maintained on the Internet.

The present invention may be applied to the game of draw poker, by allowing the player to request a specific entry in the form of an initial configuration of the player's hand. That is, the player is permitted in this embodiment to request the five specific cards which would replace the initial hand ordinarily dealt in draw poker. Alternatively, the player may be permitted to request a particular opening hand suitable for drawing to a target hand. If the target hand, for example, is a royal flush, the player may be permitted to request ace, king, queen, jack of the same suit, plus possibly a low card (for discard) from another suit.

The present invention may also be applied to a slot machine, or more preferably to a video representation of a slot machine, by allowing the player to specify the final positions of one or more reels of the slot machine. Assume that a player wishes only to play for a relatively large payout and that the largest payout is provided by a game outcome of three 7's. The player may then be permitted to specify "7" as the final position for two reels, with the final position of a third reel to be determined randomly.

Another aspect of the invention provides an apparatus for administering a game, where the game involves a first

random outcome and a second random outcome combined according to game rules to produce a game outcome, and the apparatus includes a processor, an input device connected to the processor, a display connected to the processor and a memory connected to the processor and storing a program. According to this aspect of the invention, the processor is operative with the program to receive a player request for a specific entry, where the specific entry replaces one of the random outcomes, the specific entry being such as to affect a likelihood of a game outcome and being selected from a finite set of possibilities not determined by chance. The processor is also operative to combine the specific entry and a remaining one of the random outcomes according to the game rules to produce the game outcome. The input device and the display may be connected to the processor via the Internet or may be contained in a housing together with the processor and the memory. The input device may include push buttons on a video game machine which includes the processor and the other components, or may be implemented via a graphical user interface of a personal computer or an information appliance programmed to function as a gaming terminal in communication with a gaming website.

A further aspect of the invention provides a method of playing a game of twenty-one, including the steps of allowing a player to select a specific count value instead of a player's hand, dealing and playing a dealer's hand, and comparing the specific count value to the dealer's hand to determine the winner of the game.

According to still another aspect of the invention, a method of playing a poker game includes allowing a player to select an initial hand that has not been determined by chance, allowing the player to draw at least one additional card to complete the hand, and determining whether the completed hand matches a target hand. It is contemplated to practice this aspect of the invention by using a video game device, or in conjunction with a video gaming website.

Yet another aspect of the invention provides a method of operating a slot machine (which may be a virtual or video representation of a slot machine), the method including allowing a player to specify a final position of at least one reel (which may be a virtual reel), the final position not being predetermined by chance, and the method further including the step of spinning at least one other reel of the slot machine to determine an outcome of a play cycle. According to one embodiment, the slot machine, whether or not virtual, has only three reels, and the player is allowed to specify respective positions of two of the reels, with only the third reel being spun.

By modifying known games to permit a player to select specific entries, the present invention makes the games more attractive to players. The present invention gives players a greater sense of control over the game and a feeling that the player can change his/her luck, or at least escape from a run of a certain kind of bad luck or from a continued term of bad luck. As a result, players may continue playing, rather than becoming discouraged, so that proprietors of the game benefit from more continuous and predictable play activity by the players. Furthermore, the initial player bet, the game outcome payout, and/or a fee for a specific entry may be adjusted so that the proprietor of the game is compensated for at least a part of a potential advantage that would otherwise accrue to the player as a result of the specific entry requested by the player.

It is contemplated to apply the present invention to any game of chance having two or more random outcomes, including the games of craps and pai gow in addition to other games referred to above.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a flow chart that provides an overview of a method of administering a game in accordance with an aspect of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a schematic block diagram of a video game device in which aspects of the present invention may be applied;

FIG. 3 is a schematic block diagram of a gaming system, implemented via the Internet, and in which aspects of the present invention may be applied;

FIG. 4 is a flow chart that illustrates a method of carrying out the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a schematic plan view of a gaming table adapted for use with an aspect of the present invention;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a laminated plastic game piece used in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 7 illustrates a display screen provided in accordance with another aspect of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following definitions shall apply in this specification and in the appended claims:

client device: Includes a personal computer, portable computer, palm top device, cellular telephone, personal digital assistant or any other device programmed with a browser program or other program to interact as a client relative to a host computer.

game indicia: Includes playing cards, indicia on the reels of a slot machine, video representations of playing cards and slot machine reel indicia on a lottery card, indicia on a face of a die, and indicia on pai gow tiles.

game outcome: A determination as to whether a player has won or lost a game; may also include a determination as to an amount of a payout and/or what is to be done with an initial bet.

position: A position of a reel may include either a position of a mechanical reel or an indicia displayed on a video screen and representative of a reel position.

random outcome: One or more game indicia produced by a random or pseudo-random process; in the game of blackjack "random outcome" refers only to a complete player's hand or a complete dealer's hand or an additionally drawn card.

reel: A reel of a slot machine may include either an actual mechanical reel or a field in a video display representative of a slot machine reel.

slot machine: May include a slot machine having mechanical reels controlled by a processing device, a video slot machine, a computer programmed to simulate a slot machine, and a web server that interacts with a client device to display a slot machine simulation on the client device.

specific entry: A score, or set of one or more game indicia, specified by a player to replace a random outcome.

FIG. 1 is a flow chart that provides an overview illustration of a method 100 provided in accordance with the present invention. According to a first step 102 in FIG. 1, a request is received from a player for a specific entry in a game of chance. The effect of the specific entry is to eliminate at least one random outcome and to limit, but not to exclude, the effect of chance on the outcome of the game. As one example of a specific entry that may be requested by a player, in the game of blackjack, according to an embodi-

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ment of the invention, the player is permitted to have a predetermined score, such as 18, instead of a player's hand.

At step **104** a random outcome is determined. In the blackjack example mentioned just above, the random outcome would be dealing and playing of the dealer's hand.

At step **106**, the game outcome is determined. That is, it is determined whether the player has won or lost. In the blackjack example discussed above, the playing of the dealer's hand results in a score which is compared with the predetermined score requested by the player as a specific entry. If the score provided by the specific entry is higher than the score which results from the dealer's hand (random outcome) then the game rules prescribe that the player wins. However, if the score obtained from the dealer's hand is higher than the specific entry, then the dealer wins. In accordance with conventional practice in blackjack, a tie score results in a "push" or draw, in which the player's bet is returned to the player and the player does not win.

FIG. 2 is a schematic representation of a video game device **200** in which the present invention may be applied. The electronic components and other hardware which constitute the device **200** may be the same as for known video game devices, including those which are used for video poker or video blackjack, or devices which simulate a slot machine by using a video display. The video game device **200** may include a processor **202** that controls operations of the video game device **200**. The processor **202** is electrically connected to a clock **204**, a Read Only Memory ("ROM") **206**, a Random Access Memory ("RAM") **208**, a display **210** and one or more input devices **212**. These components are contained in a housing **214**. It should be understood that the display **210** and input devices **212** are contained in the housing **214** in a manner such that the input devices are accessible to the player and the display device is visible to the player. The input devices **212** may take the form of push buttons. Alternatively, the input devices **212** and the display **210** may be combined in the form of a touch screen (not shown).

It was noted that the hardware making up the video game device **200** may be the same as the hardware used in known devices. Other hardware arrangements may also be used. The video game device provided in accordance with this embodiment of the invention may differ from prior art devices only in regard to a program stored in ROM **206** and/or RAM **208** and used to control the operation of the processor **202**. Such program controls the video game device to carry out the process illustrated in FIG. 1 and/or similar processes, which will be described in additional detail below.

FIG. 3 illustrates in schematic terms a system **300** for playing games of chance over a network. The system **300** includes a gaming server **302**, and a player terminal **304**, in data communication with each other via the Internet **306**.

The gaming server **302** may be implemented using any type of hardware now in use or later developed for performing web hosting applications. The player terminal **304** may be any client device now or hereafter used to communicate over a network with a computer host. In many cases the player terminal **304** may be embodied as a conventional personal computer. Many other possible embodiments of the player terminal **304** will be recognized by those of ordinary skill in the art. The Internet **306** shown in FIG. 3 is the well known network of computers which now virtually ubiquitously enables data communications all over the world. Other types of data networks may be used in place of the Internet **306**.

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Although only one player terminal **304** is shown in FIG. 3, it will be recognized that a large number of player terminals **304** may be connected to the gaming server **302** at different times and/or simultaneously.

FIG. 4 illustrates a process **400** that may be carried out in either video game device **200** (FIG. 2) or gaming system **300** (FIG. 3) or both. Process **400** is illustrated in more detail than the process **100** described in FIG. 1, and may accommodate a wide variety of player options in addition to those described in the blackjack example discussed in connection with FIG. 1.

According to a first step **402** in process **400**, the video game device or gaming system, as the case may be, receives a player request for a specific entry. The specific entry may be, for example, a particular initial hand configuration of five cards for a game of draw poker.

Following step **402** is a step **404**, at which the video game device or gaming system evaluates the requested specific entry and determines under what conditions the request is to be granted. (Although not indicated in the drawing, it is also contemplated to arrange the process **400** such that the player's request for a specific entry may be refused.) A decision block **406** follows step **404**. At decision block **406** it is determined whether the specific entry requested by the player calls for an additional payment (e.g. a higher bet than a normal bet for the game). For example, in the blackjack example referred to above, the player may be permitted to request a score of 19 instead of his/her hand if the player makes a larger than normal bet of a predetermined amount. For this example, it may be assumed that a suitable rule or rules to enforce this requirement is stored in the video game device or gaming system.

If the rule indicates that an additional payment is required, then step **408** follows decision block **406**. At step **408** it is determined, in accordance with the rule, what amount of payment is required. Then, at step **410**, the required amount of payment is received from the player. This may be done by deducting the payment amount (e.g. enhanced bet) from a store of credits that the player has in the video game device or gaming system.

A decision block **412** follows step **410**, or immediately follows decision block **406** if a negative determination is made at block **406**. The purpose of decision block **412** is to determine whether the payout for winning the game is to be adjusted because of the player's requested specific entry. Again, this determination is preferably made based on a rule or rules stored in the video game device or in the gaming system. If it is determined at block **412** that the payout is to be adjusted, then the adjustment is made at step **414**.

It will be appreciated that increasing the payment or bet without adjusting the payout and adjusting the payout without increasing the bet are essentially equivalent. A third equivalent would be to increase the bet while decreasing the payout. In any one of these cases, the change in the balance between bet and payout is made to offset any advantage that accrues to the player as a result of the specific entry requested by the player. As another alternative, the balance between bet and payout may remain unaltered but a specific entry may be granted to the player in consideration of the player making a sufficiently large bet on a particular game or play cycle.

It should be noted that specific entries requested by the player can be categorized at least in three ways, as those that benefit the player, as those that are substantially neutral, and as those that disadvantage the player. In some embodiments the proprietor of the game may increase the required bet

and/or may reduce the payout whenever the player requests a specific entry that increases the advantage for the player. For the other two categories of specific entry, namely the substantially neutral or player-disadvantaging entries, the proprietor of the game may not either require an additional bet or may not reduce the payout.

As another alternative instead of or in addition to adjusting the bet or the payout, the odds for the remaining random outcome may be adjusted.

If the specific entry tends to provide an advantage to the player, the adjustment to the bet, to the payout, and/or to the remaining random outcome or outcomes may be arranged to (i) completely offset the advantage to the player, (ii) more than offset the advantage (i.e. increase the house advantage), or (iii) less than offset the player's advantage (i.e., allow the player to improve his/her position with the specific entry).

Step 416 follows step 414, or directly follows decision block 412 in the event that a negative determination is made at block 412. At step 416 the gaming system or video game device determines a random outcome. In the case of the blackjack example, the determination of the random outcome consists of dealing (or virtually dealing) the dealer's hand.

Following step 416 is step 418, at which the game outcome is determined. In the blackjack example, this is done by comparing the score for the dealer's hand with the specific score of 18 requested by the player.

Then, at step 420, the amount of payout, if any, is determined. Reverting again to the blackjack example, and assuming that the result of step 418 favors the player, and further assuming that there was no adjustment to the payout, step 420 would result in the player being paid an amount equal to his/her bet.

Although FIG. 4 shows decision block 412 and step 414 as preceding steps 416 and 418, it is also contemplated in other embodiments to modify process 400 such that block 412 and step 414 are performed after step 418 (i.e., after it is determined whether any payout is required). As will be understood from subsequent discussion, process 400 may also contain a determination as to whether the player is qualified to receive a specific entry. If the player satisfies certain qualification criteria, then any otherwise required adjustment in payout or enhanced bet may be waived. Alternatively, meeting qualification criteria may be a necessary condition for receiving a specific entry, with an adjustment to payout and/or enhanced bet also being required.

Up to this point the process 400 has primarily been explained in relation to embodiments in a video game device or in an Internet gaming system. It is, however, also contemplated to apply the process 400 in a face-to-face casino environment. In that regard, FIG. 5 is a plan-view illustration of an embodiment of a blackjack table that has been adapted for convenient playing of a modified blackjack game provided in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 5 shows a table surface 500 that has six places 502-1 through 502-5, each of the places 502 being for a respective player. Each place 502 includes a "bet" gaming chip placement area 504 and an exemplary "18" gaming chip placement area 506.

During play, the player places a chip or chips representing his/her bet in the bet area 504 if he/she wishes to play a conventional hand of blackjack. But if the player places his/her bet in the "18" area 506, then this signifies that the player is requesting a score of 18 to replace the player's hand that would otherwise be dealt in the conventional game of

blackjack. The player may place a bet in each of the areas 504 and 506 to play a "free 18" hand and a conventional hand simultaneously.

According to another manner of implementing the invention at a face-to-face blackjack table, laminated plastic game pieces may be provided at the table to represent specific entries that the players may request. Once such game piece, representing a request for a score of 18 to replace the player's hand, is indicated at 600 in FIG. 6. The game piece 600 includes a front surface 602 on which an indicia 604 is provided to indicate the specific score requested by the player. The game piece 600 also has a reverse face (not shown) which may set forth requirements for the specific entry represented on the front surface. These requirements may include a required bet and/or a required modification of a payout for winning the game. Although only an "18" game piece is illustrated in the drawings, it is also contemplated to provide game pieces for other specific scores, such as 17, 19 or 20. It is contemplated that several game pieces representing various scores may be kept on hand at the blackjack table, awaiting requests from players. Other types of game pieces may be used in embodiments of the invention for other table games.

It is also contemplated to use an electronic device or display to indicate that the player has received an "18" or other specific entry.

It has been noted above that the present invention may be applied to blackjack by allowing a player to request a specific entry in place of the dealer's hand. This may also be done in the context of a physical casino blackjack table. The specific entry for the dealer's hand may be applicable only to the player who requests it, or may be applicable to all the players at the table. In the latter case, all of the players may be required to make a suitable so payment in addition to their bets.

The present invention also contemplates modifying the game of blackjack by allowing the player to request a partial specific entry to replace a portion of the player's hand. For example, a player may be allowed to request a score of 11 to replace the initial two cards of the player's hand. The player would then be allowed to draw a card or cards to the 11 partial specific entry. This modification is different from the prior art practice of treating a coupon as a free ace, in that the presentation would support "doubling down." As is known to those who are skilled in the art, doubling down occurs when the player doubles his/her bet after seeing the dealer's up card. When the player doubles down, he/she agrees to ask for no more than one "hit" card. Also the present modification is different from the prior art "free ace" in that the partial score of 11 replaces two cards instead of one, so that the dealer's hand is dealt immediately after the player receives the partial score of 11. Also, the present modification would not allow for the player to receive a blackjack. It is contemplated that a suitable modification in the bet and/or the payout would be required for the player to receive the partial score of 11 in accordance with this variation of blackjack provided in accordance with an aspect of the invention.

It is also contemplated to apply the present invention to video poker games. As is known, video poker can be played on a dedicated video game device or via a gaming system implemented through the Internet.

FIG. 7 represents a video display screen provided in accordance with an aspect of the invention to allow the player to request specific entries as an alternative to a conventional randomly dealt starting hand for a draw poker

game. In the display screen of FIG. 7, a "normal deal" button **700** is provided to allow the player to select a conventional draw video poker game. As is well known, in the conventional draw video poker game, five cards are initially randomly dealt. The player is then permitted to discard any or all of the initial hand configuration in order to receive a "draw" of replacement cards for the discarded cards. The resulting final hand is then compared with a payout table to determine whether the player has won, and if so how much the payout is. In one example, a payout table may return a payout, at increasing odds, for hands having the following ranks: pair of jacks or better, two pair, three of a kind, straight, flush, full house, four of a kind, straight flush and royal flush.

Additional buttons **702**, **704** and **706** are provided in the display of FIG. 7 to permit the user to replace the normal deal with a specific entry initial hand configuration corresponding to the respective button selected by the player. (It will be understood that the buttons may be selected via a mouse or other pointing device of a player terminal **304** (FIG. 3) if the invention is implemented via an Internet gaming system, or by a suitable input device such as a touch screen, if the invention is implemented in a video game device.)

If one of the buttons **702**–**706** is actuated, then an initial, non-random hand is dealt to allow the player to draw for a particular target hand indicated on the button. For instance, in the case of button **702**, "Draw to Royal Flush", ace, king, queen and jack of a single suit, plus another card of a different suit may be dealt automatically in response to actuation of the button **702**. This initial hand configuration constitutes a specific entry replacing the random outcome of the normal deal provided in the conventional draw poker game. Then the fifth card is automatically discarded and another card is randomly drawn to determine whether a royal flush is achieved. If so, a payout at suitable odds is provided. Otherwise, the player loses his bet, but is free to play the same game again or to select another one of the buttons **700**, **704**, **706**. It is believed that many players may find it preferable to play repeatedly a "Draw to Royal Flush" game, having a relatively high payout, instead of the conventional video draw poker game with its more frequent but usually lower payouts.

Similarly, if button **704** ("Draw to Straight Flush") is actuated, four cards in sequence in a single suit (but not ace, king, queen, jack) are dealt, plus a fifth card, to provide the specific entry. Then, as before, the fifth card is discarded and another card is randomly drawn to determine whether the straight flush is completed. A lower payout might be provided in this case.

As to the "Draw to Flush" button **706**, those of ordinary skill will now recognize the nature of an appropriate specific initial configuration of a hand to be dealt in response to actuation of button **706**.

Of course, some of the specific entry options of the embodiment of FIG. 7 may be omitted, and/or replaced or supplemented by other options, such as "Draw to Full House".

In the draw poker example described above it is contemplated that, at least in a video game or gaming system embodiment, the player may be permitted to specify any starting hand. To facilitate such an embodiment of the invention, it is contemplated to calculate in advance a suitable payout table and/or a suitable bet for every possible hand, and to store the resulting data in a lookup table to be accessed upon the player's requesting a particular hand.

Alternatively, a suitable payout table and/or a suitable bet may be calculated in real time in response to the player's request for a particular hand. An appropriate user interface may be provided including five fields in which a card is to be dealt or drawn (in accordance with conventional practice), but with the addition of pull-down menus at each field for specifying the rank and suit of the card requested for the respective field. In addition, the payment and/or payout may be calculated to allow the player-specified specific entry starting hand.

There has been described above an example of requesting a specific entry in place of the initial hand in draw poker. It is further contemplated that specific entries could be requested for other varieties of poker. For example, in "Texas hold 'em" poker, the player could be permitted to request a specific entry in place of the two card hand normally dealt to the player. The specific entry would take the form of two particular cards requested by the player. The bet required and/or the payout could be adjusted as appropriate based on the particular card combination requested.

Furthermore, it is contemplated to allow requests for specific entries in face-to-face poker games, as well as in video poker. In the face-to-face situation, house rules may be formulated that allow for specific entries to be granted on a player's request upon suitable conditions such as additional antes, and/or adjustments of a pot or payout among the players. The granting of a request for a specific entry in this example may be automatic upon the player agreeing to the required conditions, or may be subject to approval by the other players at the table.

In blackjack it is contemplated to permit a specific entry to be substituted for a "hit" card, and in draw poker it is contemplated to permit a specific entry to be substituted for one or more draw cards.

According to another embodiment of the invention, a player is permitted to request a specific entry in a slot machine, or in a virtual representation of a slot machine provided by a video game device or a gaming system. The specific entry that may be requested corresponds to a particular final reel position for each of one or two reels of a slot machine that has three reels. Thus, assuming the highest payout is for three sevens, the player is permitted to specify that two of the reels are positioned at seven and only the third reel is spun. A suitable modification to the payout and/or the bet may be required. Alternatively, the probability for the third reel providing a seven may be adjusted to be commensurate with the payout.

It is also contemplated that the present invention may be applied to the game of craps. For example, a player's initial throw of the dice may be replaced by a specific entry, or only one die out of the two may be replaced by a specific entry.

It has been indicated above that the granting of a specific entry may be dependent on adjusting the required bet and/or adjusting the payout for winning and/or changing the probabilities which govern the remaining random outcome. However, it is contemplated that a player may be granted a request for a specific entry for other reasons. For example, a casino may wish to encourage continued play by granting certain preferred players one or more specific entries based on the player's history of play or current rate of play or time period of play. As an example, a player who plays continuously for an hour at a blackjack table may be allowed two specific entries per hour consisting of a score for the player's hand of 19. Specific entries may also be awarded after the player has lost a certain amount of money within a given period of time, or has lost a number of hands in a row, or if the player has been exceptionally unlucky in a previous hand.

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An event that qualifies a player for a specific entry may be noted by a human dealer, or may be automatically detected by a device such as a video game device or a gaming server. The device may then automatically provide to the player the option of requesting the specific entry.

A specific entry may also be granted to a player on the basis of other activities of the player, such as purchasing services or goods from the proprietor of the game or from an affiliate of the proprietor, or because the player is a newcomer to the game. It is also contemplated that specific entries may be permitted at times when relatively few players are playing a game, in order to draw new players into the game and increase traffic. Also, a specific entry may be granted in a situation where the player receiving the specific entry is faring much worse than other players at the gaming table.

With the modified games of chance provided in accordance with the invention, the player is provided with additional options to specify starting conditions of the game, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the game for the player. The options provided to the player in accordance with the invention may allow the player to overcome a perceived run of bad luck, and thus encourage the player to continue playing, to the advantage of the proprietor of the game. For example, a player who has been busting frequently in blackjack may be inclined to continue playing when he/she is allowed to request a specific entry in place of the player's hand, thereby completely eliminating any chance of going bust.

Moreover, because of player preferences and for psychological reasons players may be attracted to the opportunity to pursue certain outcomes (e.g. straights or flushes in poker) even though there is no statistical advantage in pursuing such outcomes. The present invention, by permitting requests for specific entries, allows casinos to cater to such player preferences.

Players may also find it preferable to patronize casinos that provide the option of specific entries even when the players do not avail themselves of the option. Simply having the option may favorably dispose the players to the casino.

Although the present invention has been described with respect to preferred embodiments thereof, those skilled in the art will note that various substitutions, modifications and variations may be made with respect to the embodiments described herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of playing a game having a game outcome that depends at least in part on a predetermined point total, in which a hand of a player is compared to a hand of a dealer to determine a winner, comprising:

allowing a player to select a specific score instead of a player's hand;
dealing and playing a dealer's hand; and
comparing the specific score to the dealer's hand and the predetermined point total to determine a winner of the game.

2. A method of playing a game having a game outcome that depends at least in part on a predetermined point total, in which a hand of a player is compared to a hand of a dealer to determine a winner, comprising:

allowing a player to select a specific score instead of a dealer's hand;
dealing and playing a player's hand; and
comparing the player's hand to the specific score to determine a winner of a game.

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3. A method comprising:

receiving a wager for a game from a player,
in which the game has a game outcome that depends at least in part on a predetermined count value, and
in which a rule of the game provides that the player may receive at least one card determined by chance;
receiving a request from the player for a specific entry, in which the specific entry is in place of the at least one card;
determining a dealer score based on a hand of a dealer; and
determining an outcome of the game based on the predetermined count value, the specific entry, and the dealer score.

4. The method of claim 3, in which the game is blackjack.

5. A method comprising:

receiving a wager for a game from a player,
in which the game has a game outcome that depends at least in part on a predetermined count value, and
in which a rule of the game provides that a dealer may receive at least one card determined by chance;
receiving a request from the player for a specific entry, in which the specific entry is in place of the at least one card;
determining a player score based on a hand of the player; and
determining an outcome of the game based on the predetermined count value, the specific entry, and the player score.

6. The method of claim 5, in which the game is blackjack.

7. A method comprising:

receiving a request from a player, the request indicating a specific score to be used in place of a hand of the player;
determining a hand of a dealer; and
comparing the specific score and the hand of the dealer to determine a winner of a game of twenty-one.

8. The method of claim 7, in which determining the hand of the dealer comprises:

dealing at least one card of a plurality of cards to the dealer.

9. The method of claim 8, in which the player does not receive any of the plurality of cards.

10. The method of claim 7, in which the specific score is one of 17, 18, 19 and 20.

11. The method of claim 7, in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving a betting chip in a betting chip placement area.

12. The method of claim 7, in which the specific score is represented by a game piece.

13. The method of claim 7, in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving the request at a video game device.

14. The method of claim 7, in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving the request via the Internet.

15. The method of claim 7, further comprising:

adjusting a bet for the game.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

notifying the player of the adjustment of the bet.

17. The method of claim 7, further comprising:

adjusting a payout for the game.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising:

notifying the player of the adjustment of the payout.

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19. The method of claim 7, in which determining the hand of the dealer comprises:

determining a probability based on the request; and
determining the hand of the dealer based on the probability.

20. The method of claim 7, in which comparing comprises:

determining a score corresponding to the hand of the dealer; and

determining which of the specific score and the score corresponding to the hand of the dealer is greater.

21. A method comprising:

receiving a request from a player, the request indicating a specific score to be used in place of a hand of a dealer;

determining a hand of the player; and

comparing the specific score and the hand of the player to determine a winner of a game of twenty-one.

22. The method of claim 21, in which determining the hand of the player comprises:

dealing at least one card of a plurality of cards to the player.

23. The method of claim 22, in which the dealer does not receive any of the plurality of cards.

24. The method of claim 21, in which the specific score is one of 17, 18, 19 and 20.

25. The method of claim 21, in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving a betting chip in a betting chip placement area.

26. The method of claim 21, in which the specific score is represented by a game piece.

27. The method of claim 21, in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving the request at a video game device.

28. The method of claim 21, in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving the request via the Internet.

29. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

adjusting a bet for the game.

30. The method of claim 29, further comprising:

notifying the player of the adjustment of the bet.

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31. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

adjusting a payout for the game.

32. The method of claim 31, further comprising:

notifying the player of the adjustment of the payout.

33. The method of claim 21, in which determining the hand of player comprises:

determining a probability based on the request; and

determining the hand of the player based on the probability.

34. The method of claim 21, in which comparing comprises:

determining a score corresponding to the hand of the player; and

determining which of the specific score and the score corresponding to the hand of the player is greater.

35. A method comprising:

allowing a player of a game of blackjack to select one of:

receiving a hand comprising at least one card, and

requesting a specific entry;

receiving a request from the player, the request indicating a specific score;

determining a dealer score based on a hand of a dealer; and

determining an outcome of the game based on the specific score and the dealer score.

36. The method of claim 35,

in which receiving the request comprises:

receiving a chip that indicates the specific score; and

in which the specific score is one of 17, 19, 19 and 20.

37. A method comprising:

allowing a player of a game of blackjack to select one of:

allowing a dealer to receive a hand comprising at least one card, and

requesting a specific entry;

receiving a request from the player, the request indicating a specific score;

determining a player score based on a hand of the player; and

determining an outcome of the game based on the specific score and the player score.

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Related Proceedings Appendix

None